¶ Here beginneth thystory of the seuen wyse Maysters of Rome conteynyng right faire and ryght ioyous narraciōs, and to the reder ryght delectable.

SOmtyme in the Cytie of Rome was an Emperour named Poncianus a man of gret wisedome. He toke to hys wyfe a Kynges doughter that fayre and goodly was, and to all people gracious, & to her husbande right dere, and conceyued of hym and bare him a sonne named Dyoclesian. The chylde grewe, and of all people was beloued, And whā he was of ye age of seuen yeres, his mother thempresse fel sore sycke, felyng her selfe that she mighte not lyue: sent after her Lord the Emperour a messenger that he shu'de come wout taryenge yf euer he wold

see her on lyue. And whan he was co-
men she sayd vnto him. O my lord of
this infirmite may I not escape. wher
fore I humbly requyre you of a lytell
peticion before my deth. He answered
Desire what ye wyl, for I shal nothīg
deny you Then said she. After my deth
ye shal take an other wife as it beho-
ueth. I aske & pray you that she vpon
my sonne haue no gouernaunce or
power. but that he be kept and nouri
shed fer from her, and that he may get
to him connynge and wysdome. The
Emperour sayd. My moste dere wyfe,
your petycyon in all thynges shall be
fulfilled and perfourmed. This sayde
she torned her towardes the wall and
gaue vp the goost and dyed. Manye
dayes after the Emperour bewayled
& morned her deth, and longe tyme af-
ter her buryeng he shewed hys heuy-
nes and sorowe, and wold in no wyse
mary or be ioyful.

Howe

¶ Howe the Emperour to the seuen wyse maysters commytted and delyuered his sõe to lerne.

Upon a tyme as the Emperour laye in his bed he bethoughte him inwardly vpon his sonne sayig in his hert. I haue only, but one sonne, ꝑ which shall be mine heyre. It is good whyles he in is ponge that he be set to lerne connynge and wysdome by the which he maye after my deathe gouerne and rule the Empyre. Erlye whan he was rysen vp frõ his bed, he let to be called afore hun his lordes of his counsell, and of them toke aduyse what best therin was to doe. And they answered. Lord, in Rome are. vii wyse maysters they excelle and excede al other men in cunynge & lettrature, let them be sent for and deliuer to thẽ your sonne to nourisshe and to lerne. That vnderstanding the Emperoure sent hys letters sealed wyth hys seale to the seuen Maysters that they

incontynent sholde come to hym without delay. And thei anone came before the Emperour, and he demaunded thē yf they knew wherfore that he had sēt for them. They answered the cause ne your wyl we know not, but yf it plese you to shewe vs your mynde and entent we ben redy to fulfil it to the vttermost of our powers. To whome ỹ noble Emperour sayde, I haue but one sōne the which I shal deliuer vnto you to noury sche and to teche. So that by your doctrine and wysdome he may the more wysly guide and gouerne the Empyre after my decesse.

¶ The fyrst mayster named Pantillas sayde. Lorde delyuer to me youre sonne and I shal teache him as moch conning within. vii. yere as I and al my felowes can. Then spake the secōd mayster that named was Lentulus. Syr of long tyme I haue serued you and hitherto I haue had no maner re-

ward

warde. I demaunde nothyng els of you, but that ye delyuer me your lõne to lerne and gouerne, & I ſhall make hym as connyng within. vi. yere as I and all my felowes be. The thyrde mayſter ſayde that had to name Craton. My lord many times haue I ben wyth you vpon the ſea in peryl of my lyfe, and of you haue I had no maner of rewarde, yf that I myghte for my rewarde obteyne ỹ ye woulde vouchſaufe to cõmyt your ſonne vnder my rule and gouernaunce. I ſhulde enfoure hym as moche within. v. yere. if his wit therto wyll attayne as I & mi felowes can. Tho ſtode vp ỹ furth mayſter, ỹ to name had Malquidrac ryght lene of body and ſayd. My lord call to your remembraunce how that I and al my predeceſſors haue ſerued Emperours, & haue receiued no maner of reward, wherfore I ſhal aſke none other thynge but that ye wyll delyuer

me your sonne to enfourme & teache, & I shal make hym to take asmuche scyence and wysdome wythin foure yere as I and al my felowes haue lerned in al our lyues. Than spake the fifth mayster that was called Josephus, lorde I am olde and manye tymes I am called to your counseyll, & that my counsel ye know well hath auayled and profyted you and yet I folowe the same. But I desyre no more laue to delyuer me your sonne and I shall enstructe & enfourme him in as muche connynge & scyence that he w̄in .iii. yere shal profite & wite as much as I & al my felowes, tho came forthe the sixt maister that was named Cleophas which sayd like the other promisinge to learne & enfourme ỹ childe in all theyr conninges w̄in two yere. The .vii. mayster rose vp and sayde, which also desyred the childe and promysed for to learne him w̄in one yere

the

the sciences & wisdom of thē al. As all this was done. Thā ỹ emperour said my trusti frēdes I am muche bouūden to thāke you all, & euery of you, for ỹ euerych of you haue so effectually desired my sonne to nourtsche & lerne. If I sholde now cōmit him to one & not to an other, therof shulde come ỹ desceccion & variaūce amōges you. Therfore to you al and euery of you I com mit my sōne to nourtsche & to teache.

The maysters hering this with great thākynges giuing to the Emperoure toke & receiued his sonne, & lad him to wardes the courte of Rome. ¶ Upō ỹ way spake Cratō to his felowes. If we this childe shuld lerne wtin ỹ Citie of Rome there is so grete resorte & concourse of people ỹ it shuld hinder & let him in his lerning & cātasyeng. I wote a fayre place wout rome. iii. mile right plesaunt & delectable, ther let vs make a. iiii. square chāber of stone & put him therī & vpō the walles of that syde let

vs paynte and wrote the. vii. artes liberales, so that the chyld al times may se and beholde therin his doctrine as wel as in his boke and this aduyse & coũseyl pleased them all, & was done accordinge in euery pointe. The maisters dylygently euery daye durynge vii. yere taught and lettred the chyld whiche maysters determyned among them selfe and sayd, it is good that we examine our dyscyple how he is spede in commynge and scyence. They al accorded to the same. Tho sayd maystes Pancyllas, howe shall we proue him Craton sayde, Let euerye of vs as he slepeth put vnder euery corner of hys bed an olyue lefe, and than we shall know if he perceiued or felt any thing or not, this done, he wakynge greatly marueyllyng lyftyng vp his eyen towarde the rofe of the chamber feruẽtly. The maysters seyng ỹ sayd. wherfore lift ye vp your eien so sharply. He

answe

anſwered it is no maruyll, for in my ſlepe I ſaw the vppermoſt parte of the chãber inclyned toward the erth. or vnder me it was lifte vp. This herynge the mayſters ſayd among them ſelfe Yf this childe may lyue he ſhall be a man of great connynge & fame.

¶ Howe the Emperour by the counſell of the great Princes and Lordes of his Empyre wedded an other wyfe.

The princes and great Lordes of the Empyre in the meane tyme came to the Emperour and ſaid, My lorde ye haue only but one ſone, it is poſſyble that he myght happen to dye. And therfore it were profitable ye ſhulde wedde an other wyfe to engendre and make mo chyldren, to the entente that the emperyre of Rome be not lefte without heyre. Alſo ye are ſo myghty that yf it ſhulde happen you

to

to get many children ye may promote and auaunce them all to great dignities and lordshippes. Therupon answered themperour. It is your counsel that I shal take an other wyfe, thā seke me one that is gracious, pure virgine, fayre and gentill borne, and thā shall I folowe your counsell and aduyse. They wente and sought and serched many kyngdomes and londes, & at the last they foūd the kiges doughter of Castyle that ryght fayre was and beauteuouse, and her thei gaue the Emperour to wyfe. she behaued her so wel that anone in her loue he was taken so sore that he forgat & put in oblyuyon al the heuynesse and sorowe of his hert that he had taken for ꝑ deth of his first wyfe. And they lyued long together wout children. And as the Empresse sawe that she might not cōceyue. For she herde that themperoure had a sonne wꝫ seuen wise maysters to

lerne

lerne & nourysche to the behouse & pro-
fyte of Thempire, she thought in her-
self and wyshed his deth. And from ye
houre forthe she ymagyned howe she
myght conspyre his deth. It hapened
on a nyght as the Emperour laye in
his bed, he sayd to thempresse. My
most dere and best beloued wyfe, I
shal nowe shewe and open to you the
secretes of myne herte, for vnder the
sonne is there no creature that I loue
so much as you & therfore trust in my
loue, Tho sayd the fayre & noble Em
presse, Yf it be so as ye saye. I require
you of one litle boūe or peticiō, Desire
what ye wil said the Emperour, & al ye
to me is possible I shal fulfill & gyue
it you. Then said the Empresse. My
right dere lord as ye know I haue no
child by you yet conceiued. wherfore
I am sore pensife & heuy but it is she-
wed me ye ye haue one sōne only, ye whi
che is set to ye seuē wyse maysters to be
taught

taught and gouerned, that holde I & repute for myne owne sonne. Wherfore I beseche you that ye wyll sende for hym that I may se hym and haue consolacyon of his presẽce as though he were myne owne, Hereupon answered themperour. It is sixtene yere passed that I hym laste sawe, your wyll be fulfylled, Incontinent the Emperour sent vnto the seuen maysters a letter sealed wyth his secrete sygnet, that vpon payne of dethe they shulde bryng his sonne in the feste of Pentecoste or whitsontide than next folowynge.

¶ How the seuen maisters after the syghte of themperours letter wold first se ỹ course of the fyrmament and planetes whether it were good to obey his cõmaundementes, or not

And

AND as ỳ Waiſters ỳ letter had
read & had vnderſtonde the wyl
of the Emperour in the nyghte
they wente and ſawe vpon the ſter-
res of the firmamente whether it ſhuld
be expedient to them to take the Jour
ney wyth the chylde after the Empe-
rours wyl or not, which ſawe clerely
in the ſterres that ỳt they ſhuld lede ỳ
chylde in that tyme aſſygned. at the
firſte worde that he ſhulde ſpeake, he
ſhulde dye an euill deth. Wherof they
were al ſory. And as they beheelde in
a nother ſter they ſawe that, if thei de-
lyuered not the child at the day afore-
ſayde, they ſhuld leſe theyr hedes. Thẽ
ſayd one of them of two euyls the leaſt
is to be choſen. It is better that we al
dye than the childe ſhuld leſe his life.
Therefore that we maye the chyldes
life ſaue, let vs go to ỳ emperour. And
as they wer thus ſorowful, the child
came downe frome the chamber and

ſawe

saw his masters soze heui, he demaū-
ded them the cause of their heuinesse,
wherupō thei answered, Sir we haue
receyued your fathers letters vpon
payne of death, that now in this high
fest of Pentecost we shuld lede you to
your country. Wherupon we haue be-
holden the firmamēt, wherin we clere-
ly se and finde that yf we wythin the
time before prefixed present you to
your father, at the first worde that ye
shal pronounce out of your mouth ye
shal be to the most vilest deth condēp-
ned. Tho sayd the chylde I must also
behold the firmamēt with the sterres
and so he did, and founde & sawe clere
ly in a litel sterre, that yf he could ab-
steyne himselfe frō speking. vii. dayes
he shulde be preserued and saue his
life, And after he this had seen. called
his maysters, & shewed them the sterre
and sayd, Beholde my most dere mai-
ster. I se perfytely in the sterre, ỹ if I
absteyne

absteyne my selfe by the space of. viii. dayes I shall saue my lyfe, ye are now seuen maysters the wilest of ỹ world. It is a lytel thynge to you that euery of you one daye, for me answere, and wyth your wyse answere euery of you his daye my lyfe may saue and kepe. And I in the. viii. day shall speke for my selfe, and shal saue my selfe & you from peryll. As the maysters had beholden that certayne sterre, they iudged in them that the childe had sayde trouth. Almyghtie God be thanked ỹ the wisdome & connyng of our disciple vs all excedeth. Then spake the fyrst mayster Pancyllas. Lord I shal speke for you the fyrste daye and saue your lyfe. And Lentulus the seconde mayster sayd, I shal for you the secõd day answere. And so cõsequẽtly euery of them promysed to answere for hym his daye. And this sayde, they clothed the child in Purpure & lepte to horse-

backe with a fayre company, and hasted them with ỹ child towardes the Emperour.

¶ Howe the Emperour rode to mete his sonne comming from his study with great pompe and pryde.

WHan the Emperour perceyued that his sonne was commynge vpon the waye, he rode with greate Ioye to mete him. The maysters vnderstandyng the comynge of the emperour sayd to the chylde. It is best that we departe, & in the meane whyle we maye prouyde howe we may saue your lyfe. The child sayd it pleasethe me wel that ye so do, but haue mynde of me in tyme of my necessite. As they that herde, the toke ther leaue and departed towardes the Citie. The child came after accompanyed right honourably. And as he and his father themperour were mette for ioye and gladneg

nes he toke him aboute the necke and kyssed hym and sayd. My dere sonne how is it with you, is it longe sythen that I sawe you. He bowed downe his hede and answered nothyng. The father had great wonder why that he spake not, and thought in himselfe ẏ his maysters had him so enformed ẏ he rydyng shuld not speke. And whan they were comen to the palays & were descended from theyr horses. The father toke his sonne by the hande and lad hym into the hall and set him next hym and beheld him and sayd. Saye me how it is with your maisters, and how they haue enformed you, for now it is many yeres syth I saw you. He enclyned downe his head & gaue none answete. The father sayd, wherfore speke ye not to me. And whan themprelle herde that themperours sonne was commen she was ryght Joyous and glad, & sayd I wyll go to se him.

She

She apparatled her with rich vestue & atyre, and toke with her two of her gentylwomen and wente there as the emperour was sytting with his sõne, she sette her downe by the chylde, and she sayd to themperour, is this youre son that hath ben nourisshed with the seuen wyse maisters. and he sayd, it is my sonne, but he speaketh not. She sayd. Delyuer to me your sonne, and if euer he spake, I shal do him speke. Tho sayd the Emperour, tyse and go with her. The son did reuerence to ỹ father, as though he sayd I am redy to accomplysshe your wyll, and wente wyth her.

Howe the Empresse ledde Diocletian the Emperours sonne with her into her chãber for to make good chere wyth hym the which he wythstode.

The empresse led hym w̃ her into her chamber & cõmaunded all

al other to auoyde, & ſet him by her a-
foze her bedde & ſayd. O my beſt be-
loued Dioclesyan . I haue muche of
your perſō and beaute herd, but now
I am glad that I maye ſe you wyth
mine eyen that my hart coueteth and
loueth, foz I haue cauſed your father
to ſend foz you, & I haue ſolace & ioye
of your perſon. wherfoz I wt out faut
gyue yo u knowlege that I foz youre
loue vnto this day haue kept mi vir-
ginite. ſpeake to me & let vs go to bed
together, But he gaue her no wozd to
anſwer, She ſaying that ſayd to him.
O good Dioclestan haue the halfe of
my ſoule wherfoze ſpeke ye not to me,
oz at the leaſt ſhew me ſome token of
loue, what ſhal I do ſpeake to me. I
am readye to fulfyll and perfourme
your wyl, and whē ſhe had thus ſaid
ſhe embzaced him and wold haue kiſ-
ſed his mouth and he turned hys vi-
ſage from her, and in no wiſe wold cō

sent. Tho sayde she agayne to him. O sonne wherfore do ye thus wt me: beholde there is none that maye se vs let vs together slepe, and than shal ye wel perceiue that for your loue I haue kept my virginyte and he torned his vysage from her, She seynge that he was of her asshamed, shewed vnto him her naked body and brestes and sayde. beholde my sonne what body I haue at your will giue me your consent or els it shall be hearde for me to passe with my right mynde. He neyther wt sygne ne wt countenaunce of vysage shewed her onye maner of loue, but as muche as he coulde withdrawe him from her, whan she sawe ꝑ she sayd. O my most swete sonne if it please you not to consent to me ne yet speke. hoply for some resonable cause Lo here is paper pen and ynke yf ye wyl not speke wt your mouth than write your wil if I any tyme yerafter

may

may truſt in your loue or not. The chylde wrote as hereafter folowed. O lady forbid that I ſhuld defoule my fathers orcheyerde, if I ſhuld defoule it: I wote not what fruite I ſhoulde haue of it. I knowe wel one thynge, ꝑ I ſhuld ſinne in the ſyght of God, and I ſhuld ren in the malediction of my father, and therfore from hens forthe prouoke or ſtyre me no more therto. whan ſhe had the cedule ſeen and red, ſhe brake it w̄ her teth & tare or rent her clothes w̄ her nayles to her nauil & her viſage al to ſcratched it was all blody, and caſt from her al ꝑ ornamẽtes of hir hed & cried w̄ a loude voyce; come hither my lords & helpe me afore that this rude and euil body ſhame & rauiſhe me.

¶ How them preſſe complayned to thempe rour of the ſhame to her done by hys ſone.

The Emperour was in his halle and herde the crye and noyse of the empresse, he hastly ranne towardes his chamber and his knightes and other of his seruauntes folowed him after for to see what there was to do. Then beganne themperesse to crye and to speke to Themperour thus. O my lord haue pitie and compassion vpon me, beholde this ponge man is not your sone, but the foulest rybaude and harlotte that euer was borne, and a defyler of women, for as ye know wel I led and brought him wyth me into my chãber, and should haue exhorted & caused hym to haue spoken I haue done as muche there to as I canne or maye, and whyles I wyth mi wordes exhorted and meued him for to haue spoken, he hath endeuoured him selfe with me to haue sinned, and because I wolde not to him consente, but withstode as muche as

I

I mighte for to flee the ſhame, he my
vyſage hath made all blody, and my
veſture and ornamentes of my head
broken and all to torne, as ye may o-
penly ſee: And if ye had not ſo ſone co-
men vnto my callyng, he had accom-
pliſhed in me his moſt foule & worſt
wyll, whan Themperoure thys ſawe
and hearde, fulfylled with greate
malyce and woodneſſe, commaunded
his ſeruauntes that they ſhould lede
hym to the galowes and hange him.
And after his lordes herde that, ſayd
Lord ye haue no moo but this ſonne
onely. It is not good ẏe thus lygh-
telye put hym to death, the lawe is
put and ordeyned for tranſgreſſours
and myſdoers. and if it be ſo that he
muſte dye, let him by the lawe dye
leſt that it be ſaid that the Emperour
in his great furour and Ire without
law & Juſtice hath put his only ſõne
to deth. As themperour this herd cõ-
maunded

maunded him to be put in prison vnto the tyme that iudgement were giuen agaynst him. And whan themprelle vnderstode that the child was not put to dethe, she cryed & weped bytterly and would haue no rest whan the night was comen the Emperour entred into his chamber to go to bed and foũd his wife wepyng and sorowynge, To whome he sayd. O my most dere lady for what cause are ye thus sorowefull She answered. Know ye not howe ỹ your cursed sõne hath me thus, moche shame done & offended, & ye haue cõmaũded him to be hãdged & yet he liued, & your worde is not performed ne my shame is not wroken. To morow sayde themperour he shall dye by the lawe. Then sayd she. Shall he so lõg lyue. Then might it happen to you as it dyd vpon a burgeys of Rome of whome an example is sayed. The Emperoure sayde I praye you shewe me

that

that example. That shall I doe gladly sayd the Empresse.

¶ The first example of the Empresse.

IN the Cyte of Rome was a burgeyes the whych had a fayre gardyne, wherin he had stondynge a noble tree, the whiche euery yere bare or brought forthe fruite of great vertue, for who so euer eate thereof that were sicke in any maner sickenes as Lepre or other he shulde soone be hole and receyue his healthe. It hapned vpon a day that the burgeys went into his gardeyne to vysyte the tree, & beheelde vnder the tree, and found a fayre yonge ympe. He called to hym the gardyner and sayd. My frende of this yonge ympe I gyue the charge for I trust of ȳ to plante a better tree thā this tree is. The gardiner sayd I shal

shall it gladlye do. An other tyme the burgeys came agayne into hys gardine his yonge plante to vysite, and it appered to hym that it grewe not so much as it shuld do, & sayd to the gardiner, how may this be, and he sayd it is no wonder, for this great tree hath so greate armes and braunches ỹ the ayer may not come to the roote of the yonge tree. Tho sayd the burgeys, thẽ cut and hew of the armes & the bowes that the ayze maye come therto. The gardyner dyd as he was cõmaunded The burgeys came agayne an other tyme for to se his yonge Plante, and thought that it grewe not the better, & sayde to the gardyner, what is it that letteth this plante to grow now. And then he sayd. I suppose the heyght of the olde tre letteth that the sonne and the rayne maye not come therto, and therfoze it may not waxe. Then sayde the mayster to hym, hewe downe the

tree

tree by the ground, for I hope of this plante to haue a better tree than euer this was. The gardiner heringe his mayſter obeyed him, and hewe downe the tree. And as this was done the ponge plāt al wholy perysched & came to nought. wherof came great harme, for whan the poze and the ſicke peo-ple perceyued that the tree was ſo de-ſtroyed they curſed al them that were of counſell and helpers therto, by the which they all afoze tyme were heled and cured of their infirmities and ma ladies. Thēlayd the Empzeſſe vnder-ſtand ye what I haue layd, yes right well, than ſaid ſhe. I ſhall declare to you what I haue layde.

The declaracyon of the Example.

¶ This tree my lozde betokeneth your moſte noble perſone, that with your counſeyll and helpe many poozе & ſeke folke are greatlye holpen and confozted. And the ponge ympe that

vnder

vnder the greate tre is vp growen ys
your cursed sone that now by his cun-
nyng beginneth to grow and studieth
how he fyrste maye the the armes and
bowes of your myghte cutte of, and to
wynne to him the lande and prayfyng
of the people and ouer that he ymagi-
neth to destroye youre persone that he
may hym selfe reigne. But what shall
fall than therof come, al poze and feble
people shall curse all them the whych
myght haue destroyed your sonne and
haue not done it, I counsell you why-
les ye are in youre power & helthe that
ye destroye hym leste that the curse of
the people fall vpon you. Tho sayde
the Emperour, ye haue gyuē me good
counseyll. To mozow I shal cōdemp-
ne hym to the mooste vyleste death that
can be thought, whā the day was com,
the Emperour went and sate in Judg
ment, and commaunded hys seruaun-
tes that they should lede his sone to be

hanged

hanged with trompettes blowyng in tokenynge of death. And as themperours ſone was lad through the Cyte, the comen people began too wepe and cry alas the onely ſone of themperour is ladde towardes his death, and therwythall came Pancyllas rydyng vpon a hors the fyrſte mayſter, whan the chylde ſawe hym, he bowed hys hed to hym, as though he had ſayde. Haue mynde vpon me whan ye come afore my father, ſe howe I am led towardes the gallowes. Than the mayſter ſayd to the ſeruauntes, make no haſt, for I hope by the grace of god thys daye to delyuer hym from the deth. Then ſaid all the people. O good mayſter haſte you to the palays and ſaue youre dyſcyple, he ſmote the hors wyth the ſpores tyl he came to the palays, and kneled before the Emperoure & dyd hym reuerēce, To whom themperour ſayde. It ſhal neuer be to the good, whyche

anſwer

answered I haue deserued a better re warde. The Emperour sayd ther liest thou, for I delyuered to the & thy fe-lowes my sonne well spekinge, and in all thing wel manered, and now he is dome, & that worse is, he wolde haue oppressed my wife, therfore this daye he shal dye, and ye al shal dye a shame ful dethe. The mayster sayd. O lorde as for your sonne that ye saye that he speketh not, that knoweth God, and without a cause it is not as ye shall vnderstande, and that ye say more, ỹ he your Empresse wolde haue defou-led. I shal say you of a trouth, he hath ben in our companye by the space of. xvi. yeres & we neuer could perceyue suche thinges by him. And therfore mi dere lorde I shall shew you one thing that yf ye put your sonne to deth for ỹ wordes of your wife, it shulde happē to you worse than to a knight the whi che that killed his beste grey hounde

through

thzough the wozdes of his wife whi= che ſaued his ſonne from the deth. Tho ſayde the Emperour to the mai= ſter tell me that example. The maiſter ſayd, Lozde that ſhall I not do, foz a= foze oz I colde make an ende therof your ſonne myght be dede and then in vayne and without fruyte I ſhold reherſe it, but if it pleaſe you this no= table example to here, call agayne her ſonne tyll to mozowe, and as ye thynk by reaſon then do with him your plea ſure. As the Emperour ſ herd anone he let the childe to be called agayne, & in the meane tyme he ſet him in pziſon whyles the mayſter ſhuld fynyſhe, his tale. And then he began to ſaye in ſuch maner as folo weth.

¶ *The example of the firſt mayſter.*

There was a valyaunt knight which had onlye one ſonne as ye haue. The which he loued ſo much that he ozdeyned foz his kepinge thze

nourisshes, the first shoulde giue him sucke and fede him, the second shulde washe hym and kepe him cleane, the third should bringe hym to slepe and to reste. This knyght had also a grey hounde and a Fawcon that he also loued ryght wel. The Grehounde was so good ꝑ he neuer ranne to no game but he toke it, & held it tyll hys mayster came. And if hys master dysposed hym to go to batayle yf he shulde not spede in the Battayle, anone as he should mounte vpon his Horse, the Greyhounde woulde take the Horse tayle in his mouth and drawe backewarde, and wold also crye and howle meruaylously loude. By these signes the knight vnderstode if that he shuld spede in his tourney or not. The faucon was so gentil and so hardye that he was neuer cast of to his praye but he toke it. This saine knight had gret

pleasure

pleasure in iustynge and turneynge, so that vpon a tyme vnder his castell he let proclame a tornement to ꝑ whi che came many good lordes & knyghtes. The knight entred into the tourney, and his lady went with her maydens to see it. And as they went out, after went the nourysshes and left the childe lienge alone in the cradel in the halle where the Greyhound laye nigh the wall. and that Hauke or Faucon standyng vpon a perke. In this halle there was a serpent lurking or hydde in a hole, to al them of the castell vnknowen. The whiche whan he felte ꝑ they were al absent he put out his hed of hys hole, and as he no manne sawe but the childe lyenge in the Cradell, he went out of his cauerne towardes the Cradell for the chylde to haue slayne. The noble Faucon seinge that, Beholde the Greyhounde

that was slepynge, she made suche a noyse and rustelynge wyth her wynges or feders that the Grehounde awoke and rose vp, and whan he sawe the serpent nighe the childe, anone agaynst hym he lepte, and they bothe faught so longe together, tyll that the serpent hadde greuously hurted and wounded the Grehound, that he bled soze, so that the erth about the cradell was al be bled with the bloud of the grehounde. The greyhounde whan that he felt hym self so greuously hurted and wounded, stert fiersly vpon serpent, and faught soze togither and so egerli, so that betwene them the cradell was ouer cast with the childe the botome vpwarde. And bycause that the cradell had foure pomels or fete they saued the childes visage and his life from onye hurtinge fallinge towardes the erth, and what shal I say moze, Incontinent therafter w greet

payne

payne the Grehound ouercame & slew the serpen, & went & layed him owne agaīne in his place & licked his woū-des. And anone after as the iustes and torney was done, the nourisshes were the fyrst that came into the castel, & as they sawe the cradell reuersed with blood vpon the erth enuironned, and that the greyhounde was also blody, they thought and sayde amonges thē selfe that the greyhound hadde slaine the chylde, and they were not soo wise as to tourne vp againe the cradel w̄ the childe for to haue sene what was therof befallen. But they sayd, let vs flee or renne away leest that oure mat-ster put or lay the blame vpō vs and slee vs. And as they were thus awaye rennynge, they met w̄ the knyghtes wyfe, and she sayd to them, wherfore make ye this sorow, and whether will ye ren and they sayde. O Ladye woo and sorowe be to vs and to you, why

 what

what is there happened, shewe me.
The Greyhounde they sayde that our Lorde and mayster loueth so muche hath deuoured and slayne your sonne, and lyeth by the walle all full of the bloude. As the Ladye thys herde she fell to the earthe and began to wepe and cry pyteously: and sayde alas. O my dere sonne be ye thus slayne and dede, what shal I nowe make that I haue my onelye sonne thus loste, herwythall came in the knyght frome the torneye, and beholdyng his Lady thus cryenge and makinge sorawe, he demaunded her wherefore ỹ she made so great sorowe and lamētacion. She answered hym. O my lord your Greyhounde that ye loue so muche hathe slayne your onely sonne and lyeth by the walle sacyate wyth bloude of the chylde. The knyght hugelye angred went into the hal, and the Grethound went to him to mete and to fawne as

he

he was wonte to do. And the knyghte drewe out his ſwearde and with one ſtroke ſmote of the houndes heed, and went to the Cradell and founde hys ſõne al hole, & by the cradel the ſerpent ſlayne. And by dyuers ſygnes perceyued that the hounde had foughten agaynſt the ſerpent for the ſaluacyon of the chylde. Then with grete ſorowe and wepyng he taye his here and ſayd wo be to me that for the wordes of my wyfe I haue ſlayne my good Greyhounde, the whyche hath ſaued my childes lyfe and hath ſlayne the ſerpent, Wherfore I wyl put my ſelfe to ye naunce and brake his ſwearde in thre peces, and went towardes the holye lande, & abode there al the dayes of his life. Thẽ ſaid the maſter to thẽperour Lord vnderſtãd ye what I haue ſaid And he anſwered and ſayd right wel. The mayſter ſayd: Yf ye do youre

ſonne

sonne to dethe for the wordes of your wyfe, it shal come to you worse than it dyd to the knight for his greyhoūd The Emperour sayd ye haue shewed me a fayre example, and wout doubt this daye shal not my sone dye. Tho sayd the mayster yf ye do so ye do wisly, but I thāke you that ye haue him spared this daye for my sake.

¶ The second complaynt of the Empresse.

¶ Whan that thempresse herde that ỹ childe was not yet dede. She began to wepe bytterlye & sate her downe vpon the erthe in ỹ asshes & wolde not hold vp her hed. As themperour that herde, he entred into the chamber and sayde to her. O good wyfe wherfore make ye all this sorowe and trouble your selfe so muche. She sayde demaunde ye me, that know ye not wel

what

what greate dilpyte and ſhame that I haue ſuffred of your vnhappy ſõne & haue pꝛompſed me that ye ſhulde ſe iuſtyce ouer hym done and yet he lyueth of trouth, it ſhall happen to you as it happened vpon a ſhepeherd & a boꝛe. The emperour ſayd, I pꝛay you ſhewe me that example foꝛ my lerning and ſhe ſayd yeſterday I ſhewed one: and I ſawe none effecte ꝯ therof came, to what entente ſhold I now ſhewe. Neuertheles I ſhall this notable example tell and declare vnto you, in this maner here after folowynge.

¶ The ſecond example of the Empreſſel

There was ſomtyme an emperour ꝯ which had a great foꝛeſt, wherin was a boꝛe that was ſo cruel and ſo fell that all men goinge thꝛough the foꝛeſt he killed and deuoured. The Emperour was therof right heuy, & let to pꝛoclame thꝛough al his emptre that who loeuer he was that coulde

ſle the

sle the booze shuld haue his only dou-
ghter to wyfe, and therto hys Empyre
after his death, and as this in al pla-
ces proclamed was there was not one
man founde that durst meddle or in-
trompytte, Than was there a shepe-
herde whyche in hym selfe thought.
might I this booze sle and wynne. I
should not only auaunce my selfe, but
also al my generation and kynred he
toke his shepeherdes staffe in his hād
and went to the Forest. And as the
Booze had of hym a syght, he drewe
him towardes the herd man, and he
for fere clymmyd vpon a tree, Than
the Booze beganne to bite an gnawe
the tree, so that the Heard thoughte
shortely that he shuld haue ouer thro-
we it. Thys tree was laden w̄ greate
plente of frupte. The herde gadred
and plucked therof and caste them to
the Booze. In so muche that whan he
fylled hym therwith he put and layde

hym

hym downe to ſlepe. The whiche perceyuynge the herde by lytell and lytel he deſcended and with the one hande he clawed the Booze, and wyth the other he helde hym ſelfe on the tree, and ſeynge that the Booze ſlepte ſoundly and faſte, drewe oute hys knyfe and ſmote the Booze to the herte and killed hym, and wedded the Emperours doughter to hys wyfe: and after the deathe of her father he was made emperour. Then ſayde ſhe my Lorde wote ye not what I haue ſayde. He ſayd ryght well. Then ſayde ſhe, this myghty Booze betokeneth your moſt noble perſon, agaynſt whome may no man wythſtande, nepther by wiſdome ne with ſtrength. This ſhepeherde w̄ his ſtaffe is the perſon of your vngracious ſonne, which w̄ his ſtaffe of cō ning beginneth to play w̄ you as the herdmā clawed ꝑ booze and made him to ſlepe & after killed him. I the ſame

maner

maner the mayſters of your ſonne bi
theyr falſe fables & narracions clawe
and gloſe vnto the tyme that youre
ſon ſle you, that he may reygne. Tho
ſayd thẽperour god forbede that they
ſhulde do to me as they did to ỹ boye
and ſayd vnto her this day my ſonne
ſhalbe hanged. And ſhe anſwered yf
ye do ſo ye do wiſly. Than the empe-
rour the ſecond tyme ſyttyng en iuge
mẽt, commaunded to lede hym to the
galowes and hang hym. And whyles
he was goynge, the ſeconde mayſter
came before themperour doyng hym
reuerence as itis before ſhewed in the
commyng of the fyrſt mayſter. To
whom the ſecond mayſter ſayd O my
lord themperour if ye ſhoulde do ſlee
your ſonne for the woordes of youre
wife, it might worſe come to you thã
it dyd to a knight which for the wor-
des of his wife was vniuſtly put in a
pyller. The Emperour ſayd. O good

mayſter

mayster tel me how it happened, And he sayd my lord I shal not saye it but if that he wyll do call agayne youre son from the deth vnto the time that the example be tolde, the whiche yf it turne you not frome youre purpose, your wyll be fulfylled. Themperoure commaunded that the chyld shuld be called again, And vnder this maner that foloweth the second mayster began to tell.

¶ The example of the seconde mayster.

IN a Cyte was an anciēt knight which wedded a yong wyfe and a fayre as ye haue do whome he loued aboue al earthely thinges in so much that euery night he made faste the doores of his house wyth his own handes, and the keies he leyde vnder his beddes heade. In the Citie was a lawe or a custome that at a certayne houre in the nyght a bell was vsed to be rongen that after that ryngyng of

the

the sayd Bell, yf anye man or woman were by the watche men founden vpō the stretes all that nyght shulde they be kept fast in prison and on the morowe set vpon a pillery that al people myght beholde & wonder vpon them, Thys forsayd old knyght had litell mynde or lust of fleshlye dedes for ÿ he was olde and myghte not sacyate or perfourme ÿ desyres & a petytes of his yong wife wherfore euery nyght she hauing a paramour, her husbond slepynge toke the keyes & went to her loue, and whan she cam agayn al priuely she layde the keyes agayne vnder her husbondes hede, and thus played she many tymes. It befel vpon a night that the knight awaked oute of his slepe, and mysled his wyfe, and also the keyes vnder his hede were away, he rose vp & went to the dores and founde them open, the whyche he closed and bolted wythin fast e, and

than

than went vp agayne vnto hys chamber and loked oute at a wyndowe towardes the strete. And whan it was by the day about the thyrd cocks crowe, his wyfe came from here beste byloue, & founde the doze shyt and bolted wyth in, tho was she sozowful, neuertheles she knocked to haue come in, Tho spake the knight out of the wyndow. O thou moste euyll & vncleane wyfe nowe I knowe and am experte that many a time ye haue forsaken my bed and gone and done auoutrye, nowe shall ye stande tyll the bell be tongen and that the wakers maye take youe and doo wyth you accordynge to the lawe. The wyfe aunswered, Hy lorde wherfore lay ye that to me. In trouth I shall saye youe I was called by my moders maiden & fetched in the night and whan I saw that ye slepte so swetely I durste not awake you because ye at olde, & therfore I toke ye keyes

and

& wen to my mother the whych is sore sicke, that I fere to morowe she must be anoynted or aneyled not withstandyng for that I shold not you offend or displease I haue hasted me agaīne to you & haue left her lyenge in greate payne & infyrmyte. Therfore I pray you for the loue of god let me in afore the bel be rongen. The knight answered. So shal ye not come in, ye muste ther abyde vnto the time that the bell be rongen, and tel that ỹ wakers com and take you. Then she sayd ỹ shulde be to you and to me: to al our frendes and kynred a great shame & rebuke. Therfore at the reuerence of almighty god let me come in. Then sayde he. Haue in thy minde euel and false wife how oftentymes ye haue forsaken my bed & done and aduoutry. It is moch better that ye suffer shame & be wayle for your synnes here in this worlde, than for to suffer payne in helle. She

sayd

ſayd agayne to him I pray you for ȳ loue of hym that was crucyfyed and dyed vpon the croſſe haue mercy vpō me, The knyght anſwered, ye labour all in vayne for ye ſhall not come in, but ye ſhal tary the comyng of the wakers. As ſhe herde that, ſhe ſayde my Lorde ye know wel that by thys doze ſtandeth a well, yf ye let me not come in I ſhall therin drowne my ſelfe, rather than al my frendes ſhuld be ſhamed for me. Then ſayd he, wold God that ye had be drowned longe afore or ye in my bed came. And as they thus ſpake together, the mone went down and was al darke. Tho ſayd ſhe, yf it wil none other wiſe be I ſhal drowne my ſelfe, but yet afore as a trewe criſtian woman I wylle make my teſtament. Firſt I bequeth to god & to our lady my ſoule, & my body to buryed in the churche of ſaynt Peter and of all other thynges and goodes that God

hath sent me. I gyue vnto you to dis-
pose for my soule after your wysdome
and discrecyon, and whan she had
thus sayd, she went to the well and a
great stone ther beynge with both her
armes she lyft vp and sayde. Now I
drowne my selfe, & cast the stone down
into the well and wente agayne pry-
uely & stode by the doze. The knight
herynge that noyse cryed with a loude
voyce saynge, alas alas my wyfe is
drowned, and hastely came downe and
canne to the wel. And whan she sawe
that the doze was open, anone she en-
tred and locked and made faste ỹ gate
and went vp to the chamber and laye
and loked out of the wyndowe. The
knighte stode by the well & cryed and
wept bytterlye and sayd, wo be to me
I haue now lost mi most beloued wif
cursed be the tyme that I made faste
the doze agaynst her. The lady herde
that & sayd. O ye cursed old gryslarde

why

why ſtande ye there this tyme on the night, was not my body to you ſufficiēt, wherfore go ye thus euery nyghte out to your harlottes and hores and leue my bed. As he herde the voyce of his wife he was right glad and sayde Blessed be good that yet she is not drowned. But my good ladye wherfore lay ye such thinges against me, I thoughte to haue chastised you, & therfore I locked the dore. ¶ But in no wyse I entended your peryl, ye know wel what sorow I made for you whā I herde you to haue fallen in the wel & therfore I came lyghtly to haue holpen you. Therupon she sayd, falsly ye lye. I neuer dyd suche thinges as ye laye to me. But it appereth by a comen prouerbe, he ẏ is defectife or culpable hymselfe in a sinne, he iudgeth euery man to be in the same, or els the father sought neuer his sonne in the ouen; but yf ye had ben therein hym-

selfe, And therfore ye put that to me ꝙ ye your selfe haue oftentymes done & vsed, but one thing I promise you, ye shal abyde there til the wakers come, & that the bel be tongen that they mai lede you before the iudges to abyde & suffre the lawe. Tho sayd the knight. wherfore laye ye such thinges to me, I am old and al my lyfe days I haue ben conuersaunte in this Citie, and in this was I neuer dyffamed, and therfore let me in that to me, ne to your self ye do no shame. She sayd, ye speke in vayne. It is better that ye forthinke your sinnes in this world than in hel. Haue in mynde what the wyse man sayth. A poore man proude, A ryche man a lyer. An olde man a fole god hatyth. So ye be a lyer and ryche, what nede was it to you for to lie vpon me. And ye are a fole, for ye had the floure of my youth at your pleasure, and yet ye muste runne to hoores and harlotes

tes. And therfore it is a great grace of god that ye haue tyme and ſpace to forthynk it, leſt that ye ſhuld periſſhe and be damned for euermore, and for that ſuffre your penaunce patientlye. The knight ſayd. O my beſt and wel beloued Lady all though it be ſo, yet is god mercyfull, and he aſketh no thyng of a ſynner. but he amende his lyfe and forthynke and do penaunce for his ſinnes. Nowe let me come in and I wyl make amendes. She ſayd whiche deuyl hath made you ſo good a prechour. So come ye not in And as they thus ſpake the bel was rongen, the knight herynge that ſayde, O my moſt dere lady the bell ryngeth nowe ſuffer me to come in that I be not aſhamed for euer, whiche anſwered, the ringing of the bell prētēdeth the helth of your ſoule, take it pacyētly in your penaunce. And as this was ſayd come the wakers aboute the Cytye wente

and found the knight standyng in the strete and sayd to hym, O good man it is not good that ye in this houre of the nyght stand here. And as she herd the voyce of ỹ wakers, she sayd, good felowes beinge me on that olde cursed hore hunter and rybaude, for ye knowe whose doughter & what I am. Thys cursed old man is wont euery nyghte to leue my bed, & gothe to his Hores & harlottes. I haue longe forborne hym and wolde not shewe it, ne complayne vpon him to my frendes, for I trusted that he would haue amended his misrule, & it helpeth not. And therfore take him and punysshe hym after the lawe, ỹ al suche olde dotardes may take exãple by him. Then the wakers toke hym and al nyght chastysed him in pryson, and on the morone they put him on the pyllery. To sayd the Emperoure, lord haue ye vnderstod what I haue sayd & he sayd right wel. Tho

sayde

sayd ỹ mayster yf ye put to deth your sonne by the excytacyon of your wyfe, it shal to you worse come than it dyd to the knight. The Emperour sayde she was the worste woman that euer I herde of that so falsly her husbande brought to shame & rebuke. I saye to you mayster ỹ for ỹ reason of this example my sonne shal this day not die The maister sayd to him ,yf ye do so than do ye wysely. And ỹ here after ye shall ioye, & I commende you to god, & thanke you of your pacient hertinge, & of the sparinge of youre sonne, and so he departed

The thyrd complaynt of the Empresse.

Whan thempresse herde that the chylde was not dede she wepte bitterli and entred into her priuye chamber, and tare her skyn with her nayles, & with loude voyce cryed & said alas ỹ euer I was borne, & ỹ I so gret a kin-

ges doughter shold thus be intreated & shamed and therof can haue no remedy her gentilwomen this heringe went and shewed it to themperour. & he went vnto her and conforted her saying. O ladye wepe not so, ne crie not. for it becometh you nothing: whiche sayd, the loue that I haue & owe to you maketh me more to sorow thā the contempte of the dede, for why the inward loue of your herte hath hither to prohybite & letted me that I haue not retorned agayne into my countre to my father, but I fere yf I should so do to you it myght do harme, for he is myghty to honour me with ryches, & to venge my quarell and despyte, in suche wyse that ye and youres might forthynke it. Therto sayd themperour let that goe out of your mynde, shewe it not, for as longe as I lyue I shall neuer fayle you. And she sayd, lord I pray god that ye may e long lyue. But

I

I feare me that it ſhall happen vpon you as it did of a knight a of his ſõ that wold not bury his fathers heade in the churche yerd, and yet his father was for hym ſayne. Than ſayd the Emperoure. Shewe me that example hõw that was that he would not burye his fathers head. She ſayd I ſhal do it to your profyte.

¶ The thyrd example of the Empreſſe.

THere was in the citie of rome a knight that had two doughters and one ſonne, this knight had ſo great delyte in hunting, iuſtyng, and turneyng that al thing that he myght wynne and get he layde it and ſpente it therupon. In that time was an emperour named Octauian, which in richeſſe of golde and ſeluer exceded all other kinges and princes In ſo much

that

that he had a toure ful of gold, and or dayned a knight to haue the kepinge and charge therof. This knighte that so haunted iustynge, and other ydell games came to so great pouerte that he was dysposed to sel his heritage, & called to him his sonne and sayd. My sonne it behoueth me of your counsel for necessyte and pouerte compellethe me to sell mine heritage, or els for to finde an other waye by the whiche I may lyue, for yf I shoulde sell myne heritage, ye & your sisters shoulde perisshe. The sonne sayd. Father yf ye cã finde ony other meane without sellig of the herytage. I should be redye to helpe you. To whom the father sayde I am bethought vpon a good counseyl. The emperour hath a toure ful of gold, by night time let vs goe thyther with instrumentes and dygge and hewe throughe the toure, and lette vs take of the Golde as muche as shall

ſuffiſe vs. Therto anſwered the ſonne and ſayd, that counſeyl can not be amẽded, for it is better of themperours golde to take to helpe vs than out heritage to ſell They roſe vp bothe in a night and went to the towre and with inſtrumẽtes they made their through an hole, and toke as muche golde as they both coud cary away at ỹ tyme. The knyght payed his dettes & haũted agayne iuſtes as he dydde before tyll all was ſpente and conſumed. In the meane whyle the keper of, the treſure wente into the toure and whan he ſawe the treſoure ſtolen, and a greate hole made through the wall, he began to waxe ſore a ferd and went to themperoure and ſhewed howe it was befallen, To whome themperour ſayd angrelye. What nedeſt thou to ſhewe that, haue I not delyuered to the my treſoure, & therfore of the I wyl aſke it. Tho anone as the keper herd ỹ wẽt

to

to the toure agayne, and set aboue the hole a great vessell ful of pytche medled with other gummes so subtely, ꝑ no man myght come in at ꝑ hole, but that he must nedes fal into that vessel and if he therin fel coulde no moze cõout of it. Not longe after the knighte had al the golde consumed and spent, and went agayne with his sone to the toure to stele moze golde. And as the father went in firste, anone he was falen in the vessel with pitche to ꝑ necke and whan he sawe that he was taken and cold not gette out, he sayde to hys sonne folowe me not foz yf thou dost thou mayst not escape to be taken. Than the sonne sayde, god defended it ꝙ I shold not helpe you: foz yf ye are foundē we are al but dede, & if that ye may not be holpen by me, I shall seke counsell how that ye maye be deliuered and holpen. The father sayd, ther is none other counseyll, but with thy swerd

swerd smyte of myne heed, and as my body is found without heed, no man shal know me, & so thou & my doughters may escape & auoyde thys worldly shame and death. The sonne sayd. Father ye haue gyuen the best counseyl. For yf it were so that ony manne might perceyue onye knowledge of you, none of vs shulde escape ỹ dethe & therfore it is expedient ỹ your heed be smytten of. Anone he drew out his swerde and smote of his fathers heede and cast it into a pytte, and afterward hid it therin and yede and shewed to his systers all the matter whiche many dayes after pytuely bewayled the deth of theyr father. After thys ỹ keper of ỹ tresour came into the toure & found a body wythout onye heed, wherof he wondred sore, and shewed it to ỹ Emperoure. To whome he sayde, bynde that bodye at the tayle of an horse, & so drawe it by al the stretes of the Cytie

and

and dylygentlye take good hede yf ye here ony cry or wepyng, where so euer ye here that he is lord of ỹ houle, take all them and wyth the body draw thē to the galowes and hange them. The which themperours seruauntes fulfil led accordyng to hys cōmaundement. And as the came agaynst the houle of of the dede knyght, and as the doughters saw the body of theyr ded father, they made a maruelous grete shryth and wept pyteously and as ther brother that herd, anone he wounded him selfe greuously in the mouth wyth a knyfe. so that grete plenty of blod cam oute of the wound. The offycers whā the herde that noyse and crie entred in to the houle, and demaūded the cause of theyr noyse and clamour. Tho answered the sonne that I am this woūded, for whan my sisters sawe mi blod so habundauntly goo oute as ye see, they began to wepe and cry. And whā

the

officer sawe the wound they beleued hys wordes, and so dysceyued wente their wayes, and hynge the bodye of the knyght vpon the galowes where it hinge long tyme and his sõne wold neyther take his body down from the galowes, ne yet bury his hed the Empresse sayd vnderstãd ye what I haue sayd. Themperour sayd ye right wel.

¶ The declaratyon of the example.

¶ Tho spake thempresse, thus mi lord I fere me it shalbe of you and of your sonne. Thys knyghte for loue of hys sonne was made poore, and fyrste he commytted theefte and brake the tour, secondary dyd hym selfe to be headed, that hys chyldren shulde haue no shame. After the sonne cast hys hede in a dyke, and buried it neyther in chyrche nor in chyrch yerde, his body he suffered to hange styll vpon the galowes

yf

if ẏ he could not haue taken it downe in the day he might well haue done in the night. In the same maner ye labour night and day that ye may promote your son to honour and riches. But wythout doubt he dayly laboureth for your confusyon and destruccyon, that he maye regne after you in your empyre. Therfore I aduise you that ye do hym to be hanged before or he you destroye. Themperour fayde ye haue shewed me a good exsample. The knightes sone whā he had smiten of his faders hede wold not bury it, wythout doute my sonne shal not do so by me, but he cōmaunded anone hys officers that they shuld lede him to the galowes, and they obeyed hys commaundement hastly, and as they lad him through ẏ stretes the people made great noyse and lamentacyon, alas alas the onely sone of the emperoure is lead agayne towardes the

galowes,

galowes, and as they thus ladde hym the thyrd mayster named Cratō came ryding vpon an horse, & as the childe sawe hym he bowed downe his heade to him as though he had sayde, haue mynde vpon me. The people cryed saynge. O good mayster hast you & saue your disciple. He smote his horse with spores & hasted him to the Palays. And whan he came before them, perour he honourablye salued him, whiche sayd thy comyng hyther shall neuer auayle thee, nor it that thou comest for. The mayster sayd. I hoped in my cominge to haue ben welcome and haue had a better rewarde & not to haue be rebuked. The Emperoure sayd, as ye haue deserued so shal it be to you. To whom he sayd. My lorde what haue I deserued. Thempetroure sayde, ye haue tyght well deserued death. For why I delyuered to you my sonne wel speakinge and wel ma-

nered for to enfourme and teche, and ye haue delyuered hym agayne to me doume and a tybaude. To whom the mayster sayd, in that ye say he is doũe that I commyt to God, for he maketh the doume to speake and the deafe to heare. But in that ye saye ẏ he would haue your wyfe enforced that wold I gladly know yf onye creature haue ẏ seen, for there is no malyce aboue the malyce of a woman, and that shall I proue by a good example that womẽ are ful of lesynges and deceptions, & yf ye, put to death your sonne for the wordes of your wyfe. it shal hapen to you as it dyd to a noble manne of hys, wyfe and of hys Eye, the whiche he lo ued meruceylously. To whome the Emperoure sayd. I praye you tell me howe that women are ful of malyce & lesynges. whyche sayd I wyll not do it, but ẏ ye fyrst call agayne your sõne from the deth, and then at your plea-

sure

ſute I ſhal ſhewe the example. Than themperour anone made the chylde to be called agayne and put in pꝛiſon. Than the mayſter began to ſay thys example in this fourme folowing.

¶ The example of the thyrd mayſter.

THere was in a Citie a ryche burgeys that had a Pye the which he loued ſo muche that euerye day he taught her to ſpeke latyn and hebꝛewe. And whā ſhe had lerned perfectly to ſpeake thoſe two langages, al that ſhe ſaw & herde, ſhe ſhewed & tolde to her maiſter. This good man had a layꝛe yonge wyfe as ye haue, ꝑ which he loued muche, but ſhe contrarie loued not him, bycauſe he myghte not furniſhe her of ſuch pleaſures and luſtes as ſhe deſired to haue, and therfoꝛe had ſhe an other layꝛe yonge man that ſhe loued aboue her huſbande. And alwayes as her huſbād was out

of the towne about his marchaũdise & other besynesse to do, and she sẽt for her best beloued that they myght together make good chere. The pye as she that sawe tolde it to her mayster, at his home compynge. in suche wise ỹ the noyse ranne al ouer the citie of her aduoutry, wherof her husband many tymes brauled and chide her. She answered him, ye beleue your cursed pie, which as longe as she lyueth shal alwayes make betwix vs baryaunce & dyscorde. And he sayd the pie cãnot ly, for that she seeth and hereth that she telleth me, and therfore I beleue her more than you. It fortuned that this good man went into ferre countres to do his marchaundise, & as sone as he was gone his wife sent for her frende and loue to solace & make good chere wt̃ hym, but he durst not come by daye lyght, but abode to the euenynge lest that he sholde be sene and marked of

the

people. And as the nyght was comen, he knocked at the gate: & ſhe was redi and opened it & ſayd. Go in freelye for no mā ſhal ſee you, and he ſayd I fere me that the curſed pye ſhall accuſe vs for by her is comen greate ſclaundre vpon vs throughout al ỹ citie. Entre in ſhe ſayd boldely and fere not. And as he ſholde paſſe through that halle where the pie was in her cage, ſhe herd him ſay theſe wordes. O my moſt beloued I feare me greatly of the pye ỹ ſhe ſhal bewraye vs. And as the wife herde that ſhe ſayd. Be ſtyl foole, it is darke ſhe may not ſe you. Then ỹ pye that herynge ſayde, If I ſe the not I heare thy voyce, & thou doſt wrong to my maiſter, for thou ſlepeſt with my mayſtreſſe, and whan my mayſter cōeth I ſhall tel him. The yonge man heryng that ſayd. Tolde I not you ỹ the pie ſhuld diſcouer vs. And ỹ wife ſayd feare not, for this nyght we ſhal

be auenged vpon the pye. And entred into the chamber and slepte together that nyght. About midnight the wife arose, and called to her a mayden and sayde fetche me a ladder and set vp to the rose of ỹ house that I may wreke me vpon the pye. The mayde dyd soo and they bothe went vp and made an hole throughe the couerynge of thee house ryghte ouer the pye, and there throughe caste sande clay, stones, and water vpon the pye, somoche that the poore pye was nere deade and on the morne the yonge man wente erly out at a backe dooze. And whan the good man was comen home as his custum was he went and vysited his pye and sayde to her. O pye my welbeloued bryde, say me how thou hast fared the whiles that I haue bene oute, She sayd mayster I shal tel you tydinges that I haue herde, youre wyfe as sone as ye were gone by the night time she

let

let a man come in and as I that herde I tolde him ꝑ I wold ſhewe it to you at your compynge home, that not with ſtondyng ſhe lad him into your cham ber, and ſlepte wyth hym all night, ye demaunded me al ſo how that I haue done in your abſence. And I ſaye you of a trouth that I was neuer ſo nygh my death as I was that ſame nighte wyth ſnowe hayle and raine that fyll vpon my body, ſo longe durynge that I was almoſt left for dede. The wyfe whan ſhe herde that ſayde to her huſ bonde. Syr you beleue your eye now maye ye here what ſhe ſayth, ſhe com playneth that in the ſame nyght there fyll ſo much ſnow hayle and rayne vp on her that ſhe was almoſte dede, and yet ther was none of thē all that ſame night, for ther was not in a yere a fay rer ne a clerer nighte than it was, and therfore from hencefoꝛth beleue her not. Tho wēt the good mā to hys ney bours and demaūded of them if that

night were any tẽpest or rayne. They answered that some of them had waked al the night, & in al that yere they had not sene a fayrer nyght. Tho wẽt he to his house and sayde to his wyfe I haue founden you in the trouth for the nyght was fayre and cleare as I vnderstande of your neyghbours, ye may nowe knowe of a troth sayde she the pie is a lier, with her lesinges she hath sowẽ and made discorde betwixt vs, & ouer ỹ I am diffamed throughe the citie by her falle lesinges, than the burgeys went to the Pie & said wherfore haste thou made lies and falle tales be twix me and my wyfe. Is thys the thanke that I haue for the mete ỹ I was wõt to gyue the w̃ mine owne hãdes euery day, & hast also therby mi wife brough into grete diffamacyon through al the towne. The pye answered, god knoweth that I can not lye for that I sawe and herde that haue I

shewed

shewed to you. Than sayd he. ẏ lyest?
Haste thou not sayde vnto me that in
that same nyght was hayle & Snowe
and rayne that thou haddest nerehād
loste thy life which is false. And ther-
fore frome hensforth thou shalt make
no mo lesinges ne dyscorde betwix me
and my wyfe, & toke ẏ pie & brake her
necke. As ẏ wyfe ẏ saw she was glade
and sayd nowe haue ye done wel now
maye we al our lyue dayes lyue in re-
ste and peas. And whan he had slane ẏ
pye, he loked vp and sawe in the tope
of the house a ladder and a vessell w
water sand and stones, and as he that
beheld, he perceyued the falshed of his
wyfe. and cryed withe a loude voyce.
wo be to me that for my wyues wor-
des I haue my Pye slayne and all my
solace and ioye lost. the whiche in all
thynges sayd to me trouth. And as he
hade thus doone anone for sorow les-
te his marchaundyse and al his house
and

and went towardes the holye lande, and neuer retorned agayne towardes his wyfe. Than the mayster sayde to the Emperour, Syr haue ye vnderstande what I haue said, he answered right well the mayster sayd, was not that a false and cursed wyfe that so by her lesinges caused the Pye for to be slayne. The Emperour sayd. In trouthe she was full of falsenesse. I for thinke greatly the Pye, the which for her true saying lost her life. Verely I say to you that ye haue told me a faire example therfore this daye my sonne shal not dye. Tho sayd the mayster. Syr yf ye do so ye doe wyselye, and I thanke you that ye haue spared your sonne, this daye for my wyll, and to god I commende you

¶ The fouth complaynt of the Empresse.

whan

Whan the empꝛeſſe herde that the childe was not yet deade, ſhe made great noyſe and crienges in ſuch wiſe that ſhe was herd thꝛough the palais and ſayde. woo be to me that euer I was made Empꝛeſſe, wold god I had dyed whan I was bꝛought into theſe parties whan the Emperour herde ỹ noyſe and crye that ſhe made, he entred into the chamber, and conforted her as muche as he might and demaũded the cauſe of her lamentacion, whiche ſayd, O myn owne lorde haue no wonder though that I be in this gret ſoꝛowe and agont foꝛ I am your wife and in your compayne by your ſonne I am ſhamed, as ye ſawe me lately all be bled and ſcratched, & ye haue pꝛomyſed me that he ſhuld therfoꝛe be hãged, & yet he liueth, wherfoꝛe ſhoulde I not ſoꝛowe Themperour anſwered be content and pleaſed, and I ſhal do iuſtiſe vpõ my ſõne to moꝛow, But in

that

that I forbare him yester day, was at the meuyng of one of the maysters by an example. Than sayd she. Haue ye forboden to do iustice for owne, word were it so for al the world ye shuld not let do iustyce, & ye say for the example of one mayster ye haue lefte it. I feare me it shal happen with you and wyth your maisters as vpō a tyme it fortuned to an Emperoure with his seuen wise maysters. ¶ The emperour sayde I praye you tell me that example. ¶ She sayd. To what entente should I laboure in vayne, for yester daye I shewed you a good example & it auayled not, for what someuer I shewe for your honoure & profyte ỹ the maysters of your sonne torne vp and downe to your destruccyon as in this present example I shall clerely shewe you To whom themperoure sayd, O my best beloued lady tel me that exãple, that by the same I may the better beware

beware, for though that I reſpyted my ſonne like for one daye, I ſhal not therfore giue him his lyfe, for that is differed, it is not therefore auferred. And ſhe ſaid gladly I ſhal ſhewit for your prokyte and began to tell it as here after foloweth.

¶ The fourth example of the Empreſſe.

SOmtyme was in the citie of rome ſeuen wyſe maiſters, by whome al the empire was gouerned and ruled. And themperour that than was, dyd do nothinge or attempte wythout the counſell of them, as they vnderſtode that the Emperour was to them ſo inclyned, that without them he ſhoulde ordayne or do nothynge, in the meane tyme the made by theyr arte and conninge ỹ the Emperoure ſhuld clerely ſe as longe as he was in his palays but anone as he was oute of hys palays,

layd, he was made blynde. & that dyd they to the entent that they might the more freely intrompt themselfe of all thinges that apperteyned to themperour, by the whiche they gat and wan to them great profite & lucre of goodes, & after they had made, & wrought that experiment, they cold neuer chāg it ne for do it, afterwarde. but themperour abode styl blynde many yeres.

Then the. vii. mayſters made and ordeyned through out the empyre, that if ony man had dreamed a dreame he ſhuld come vnto them with a ſtorene of gold or of ſiluer, & they ſhoulde expounde and declare vnto them the interpretacion of theyr dremes wherby, and by other vniuſt meanes they obteyned muche more ſubſtaunce and mony of the people than themperoure did. So vpon a time whan he ſat at the table w the empreſſe he began to ſighe and ſorowe in hym ſelfe, & whan

ſhe

she percepued that she enquered dilygently of him the cause of his heuines & doloure. The emperoure sayd, shuld not that to me be heuy and sorowfull that I so longe haue ben blinde & out of my palays, and of that can haue or finde no remedy. To whome, spake the empresse & sayd, my lorde here my coũseyll and it shall neuer repent you yf ye do therafter, In your courte ye haue. vii. wise maysters by whom ye & al ỹ empery is gouerned, yf ye now beholde and marke this in your mind ye shall fynde that they are the cause of your blindnes and disease, and if it be so they are worthy to dye a shamefuldeth, therfore take hede to my coũsel and aduyse. Sende ye for them & shewe vnto them your dysease and infirmyte, and threte them one payne of theyr liues. that they should fynde a remedy to make you hole of youre sickneſſe and blyndneſſe. This coũsell

pleased

pleased the Emperour well, and anon sent for the maysters, and whan they were come. themperour anon showed vnto them his infyrmyte & blyndenes and charged them vpon payn of deathe, that they should secke a remedye and make hym hole thereof. Then answered they, ye desyre of vs a thynge that is difficulyse and hard for vs to do thus shortly but gyue vs respyte and dayes and in the tenthe daye we shall gyue you answere. Themperour was there with well content and pleased. Then the seuen wise maysters wente to counsell, how they myght that best chaunge and alter, and that in no maner could they fynde the meane howe they myght put awaye the blyndnes from the Emperour, wherfore they were all right sorowful, and sayde amonge them selfe, without we finde a remedy we are all but dede men. So went they from thens through out al

the

the Empyre and ſought yf they colde fynde ony remedy or counſel therfore It happned then vpon a tyme goynge through a citie, & in the middes therof they found childzen playnge, and after them came a man w̄ a talente or floxene of golde and ſayde to them. Good mayſters this night I haue dzemed a dzeme. the interpzetacion therof I wold faine know. Wherfore I pzay you ſhew me what it ſignifieth & take thys gold to you. That herd one of ỹ childzen that playd among the other and ſayd to hym, gyue me the golde & not them, & I ſhal expound thy dzeme The man ſayde. I dzemed this night that in the myddes of myn orchyerde was a greae ſpzinge of water, wherof came many ſmal ſpzinges that al min orchyerde was full and ouerflowē w̄ water. The childe ſayd, take a ſpade and digge in the ſame place there as ye thought that the water out ſpzang

& there shal ye finde an hoorde of gold so great that ye and al your childzen & linage shalbe foz euer ryche. The man did as the child had shewed hym, and founde the tresoure accozdyng to his wozdes. Tho went the man to ỹ child and offred him a pound weyght of the gold that he had founde foz the interpzetacio of his dzeme, & he wold none receyue but cõmitted him to the pzayers of the mã. The. vii. maysters whã they hearde the childe so wyselye expowne the dzeame, they sayde to him, good childe what is your name he answered & sayd I am called Merline. Then sayde the maisters, we se clerely great wisdome in you, we shall shew vnto you a greate mater, and of that we wold gladly that ye could finde a remedy. The childe sayd, Shewe me your mater, and they said themperour of rome as long as he is in his palais he hath his sight clere wout any impediment

pedyment. And as sone as he is gone out of his palays he is so blynde that he may not se. Yf ye can now determyne the cause herof, & finde a remedy that he may be eased & haue his sight agayne ye shal haue greate rewardes and honours of thẽperour. The child sayd. I know the cause as wel of hys blindhede as of the remedye. They sayd to him. Come with vs to the emperour, and ye shalbe rewarded so largely ỹ ye shalbe pleased. To whom ỹ childe sayd, I am readi to go w̃ you. And whan they came w̃ the child before the Emperour they sayde to him, Lord loo here this child that we haue brought afore you ỹ which shal fulfil your desyre as touchyng the cause of your blidnes as the recouerig of your sight. Thẽperour said, good maisters wol ye take it vpõ you & abide theroy ỹ the child shal do w̃ me. Thei al said ye, for we be experte in hys wysdome.

Themperour torned him self towardes ye childe and sayde, wyl ye vnder take to tell me the cause of my blindnesse & the remedy. The childe answered and sayd. My lorde the emperour lede me into your bedchamber, & ther I shal shewe you what is to be done. And as he was therin brought he said to the seruauntes, take of the clothes of the bedde, and al the apparyle, & ye shal se wonders. And as ye was done they saw a wel smoking that had, vii. spriges or floodes, the which whā thē perour sawe meruayled greatlye, the chyld sayd ye se this well and wythout it be quenched ye shal neuer haue your syzt, themperour sayd. how may that be, ye chyld sayd, but by one way Themperour sayde. Shewe vs than the meane, and yf it be possyble to me it shalbe downe, ye I may recouer agayne my syght as well wout as wtin. To whom the chylde sayde my lord

the

the.vii.sprenges of this well are these vii.wyse maysters,the whiche you and your Empyre hytherto haue traytorosly gouerned and haue you made blynde as ye be without your palays that they your subgettes by extorcion myght plucke and pil,ye not seynge, but now they knowe not the remedy. Here ye now my counsel,& this welle shalbe quenched and extyncte do strik of the ferst maysters hede,& anone ye shal the first spring quenched,and so by ordre one after an other,till ỹ they are all beheded,and anone al the sprin ges wᵗ the wel shalbe vanysshed and gone awaye and ye shal haue agayne your sight as ye had afore. And as this was done and fulfilled ,the well with the, vii.springes were vanished And as themperour had hys sight a- gayne he made the childe a gret lorde and gaue him great habundaunce of goodes.After that spake thempresse.

my lord haue ye this example wel perceyued that I haue tolde you, and he sayd ye in the best wise, ye haue recited a good and a rtal example. Than said she. In the same wyse your, vii. wyse maysters intende to do with you, by theyr false narracyons, that your sone may reigne vpon you, ỹ god forbede.

¶ The declaratyon of the example.

¶ This welle is your sonne wherof oute flowen seuen sprynges, that signefie the seuen wise maysters the which sonne ye may not destroy without the. vii. maisters be made feble & brought to nought that done this wel that is your sonne with al his cauillacions and wiles shal not scape, but let him be hanged first leste that he haue helpe of his maisters, and forth after consequently the, vii. maisters. And so

ye

ye shall gouerne and guide your em-
pire in reste and peace. Themperoure
anone commaunded his seruaũtes to
lede his sonne to the galowes whiche
they were lothe to do. So was there
than a grete multitude of people ga-
thered with great noyse and bewaili-
so that the noyse came to the ers of the
fourth maister named malquidzac, the
whiche lepte vpon his hoyse, and ha-
sted him to the palays. So mete with
him his disciple and did reuerence to
him, and recommaũded him vnto him
and whã he came before the emperour
and had done his obeysaunce and re-
uerence as appertayned. Themperour
answered and said, Litel thanke haue
ye olde cursed caitife for the techinge
of my sonne for I deliuered you my
sonne well speakinge in al thinge right
vertuous. And ye haue sent him a fole
dõpe, & a ribaude, for he wold belaine
w̃ force my wife, & therfore al ye w̃ hi-

togither shalbe hanged. Tho sayed ỹ mayster. My lorde I haue not that deserued of you, god knoweth whi your sonne speketh not, in shorte tyme shall perceyue other thinges, but ỹ time is not yet comen. But in that ye saye he wolde haue oppressed your wyfe, that is not gospel ne proued, ne for one singuler persone ye should not iudge to deth your sonne, yf now for ỹ wordes of your wife ye iudge your sõne to die it wil be worse to you thã to an old mã of his wyfe, & that I shal proue. To whom the emperour sayd. Thinke ye to do wt me ye olde dotarde, as sõtime seuen wyse men dyd to an Emperour. Ther to sayd the master, The offence or trespace of one or yet of twẽtt, may not sound to the rebuke & blame of al other, for ouer al the worlde there bee bothe good and euyll. But one thyng of a trouth I shal shewe you, ỹ euyll shall come to you yf ye this daye doe your sonne to deth for the wordes of

your wyfe, the whyche I wolde ſhew by a notable example. Than ſayd the emperoure Wol ye that recyte for our lernynge. The mayſter ſayde. Yf ye wyll calle agayne your ſonne, & kepe him til I haue made recytacion of the example, & than what ſomeuer ye ſhal thinke beſt to done with him, do it. I ſhall reherce this, example or els not The Emperour cõmaunded that he ſhulde be called agayne and deſyred, the mayſter to ſaye as here after enſu eth or foloweth.

¶ The example of the fourth mayſter.

THere was an olde knyght & a ryght wyſe man that longe li- ued with wife and child. His frendes came to hym many tymes & counſey- led and exhorted him that he ſhoulde take a wyfe. The knight thus counſel led and ſtyred by his frendes ſo ofte

times

times that at the last he agreed to the. And they gaue him to wife the doughter of the prouost of Rome that riche was and right fayre, whome whan he had sene anone he was made blinde & taken in her loue, and began to loue her meruayllously well and whan they had bē a certaine space together & had no fruite ne childe. Upon a time in a morninge it happened that she wente to the churche where she met with her mother, and saluted her as it behoued. My dere doughter said ỹ mother how pleaseth you your mariage and your husbonde. She said right euill, for ye haue giuen to me an olde lame man, me in al thinges displeasinge, I wolde ye had that same time buried me, for I had leuer lye and ete with a swine thā with him, and therfore I may no lenger thus endure, but I must loue an other. Tho sayd the mother, god forbede ỹ. My dere doughter how longe

tyme

tyme I haue be with your father and yet hyther to I neuer medled me with ſuche folyſhenes. The doughter sayde mother it is no meruaile for ye both in your youth mette together and the one toke ſolace of the other, and I may receyue of him no maner of ſolace corporal for he is colde, and vpon the bed he lyeth as ſtyll as a ſtone, or as a thynge immouable: The mother anſwered, yf ye wyl loue an other ſay me what he is The doughter sayd a preiſt I wil loue to whome the mother sayd it were better to you and leſſe syn to loue a knight or a ſquier thā a preiſt, and the doughter sayde. If I ſhuld loue a knight or a gentel ſquier in ſhort time he woulde be wery of me, and after that he wolde do me ſhame and tell it ouer all, and ſo it is not of the Preiſt, for he wil holde and kepe hys owne honoure and counſeyll as well as myne.

And alſo ſpirituall menne bee more

true

true to their loues than the seculer me
The mother sayd. Here my counseyll
& it shall be good for you. Olde fol-
kes are wylly & fell tempte your hus-
bonde first & yf ye escape hym without
doynge any harme or smytynge, than
loue the preest. The doughter sayd I
may not so longe abyde. The mother
sayd vpon my blessynge abyde tyll ye
haue proued him. The doughter said
vpon your blessynge I wyll abyde so
longe, tyl I haue attempted him but
first say me how that I shal proue hi
The mother sayde, He hath in his or-
chyerde a tree whithe he loueth moch
do that to be smiten downe whyles he
is out at hontynge, and agenst his co-
mynge make him there a fyre, and yf
he forgyue it you than may ye surelye
loue the preest. As she had herd ỹ cou
seyll of her mother she went to her
house. To whom her husbonde sayed.
Where haue ye ben so longe. She an-

swerd

swered I haue ben in the church wher as I met wt my mother and with her a lytell I haue talked & comined, and so began proprely for to dyssymyle. After midday ye knight rode out for to hunte. Then she thynkinge vpon the counseyll of her mother went to the gardiner and & sayd to him, Cut dow ne this yong tree newly planted yt I may make a fyre therof to warme my lord wt al at his comyng frō hūtinge. For it is a grete wind & aright sharpe cold. The gardyner sayd, Madame yt wil I not do, for mi lord loueth better yt tree thā he doth all ye other trees neuertheles I shal wel helpe you togather wood ynough for to make with all a good fire but in any wise this I wil not hewe downe. She herde that and boldlye she toke the axe from the gardiner and hewed downe the tree her selfe and made the gardiner with other to bere it home. At euin whan ye lorde came from huntyng he was sore

a colde. The lady let make a grete fire, & went and met wᵗ him, & set him on a stole afore the fire to warme. And as he a litel while had sitten he perceyued the odoure of the fire, and called to him ỹ gardiner & sayd, I fele by this odoure ỹ my newe plante bzenneth in the fire. The gardiner sayd. Lord it is true, my lady your wyfe hath felled it downe. The knight sayd to her God forbede ỹ my plante shold be cut downe by you. She answered anone and sayd. Lorde I haue done it knowinge the wether colde and you also colde, and therfore I haue ordeyned this fire for your cõ= forte. As the knight that herde he lo= ked angrely vpon her and sayd, O cur sed woman howe wereſt thou so hardi to hewe downe so gentill a yonge tree the whiche thou knowest well that I loued aboue all other trees, As she that herde she began to wepe and excuse her selfe and sayd my lorde I haue done it

for

for your good and prouffite, & ye take it so greuously, and begā to cry wo wo be to me. Anone as the knight sawe ỹ wepig and teetes of his wife and herd her cause he was moued with mercy sa tinge to her. Cesse of your wepyng, and beware how that ye ony more anger or trouble me in ony thinge, that I loue. The next day erly in the morninge, she went agayne to the chirchewarde, and met wt her mother coming agaynst her & they saluted eche other. Than the doughter sayed to her mother. O dere mother I will loue the prest, for I haue attempted my lorde as ye counseyled me, but al for nought, for he anone for-gaue it whan he sawe me a lytel wepe Tho sayd the mother, though old men one tyme forgiue, they double the pain vpon an othertime, & therfore I cōsel you ỹ ye an other tyme attempte hym. Tho sayd ỹ doughter I may no lēger abide, for I suffer so muche payne for

the

the loue of the preest, that w̄ my tonge I canne not tell therfore ye shall per done me I will no more folowe or do after your counsell, than sayde the mother, for the loue that the chylde shuld haue vnto the mother attempre him yet ones, & for your fathers blessinge, and then yf ye goo quite w̄oute any harme or hetinge, loue the preeste in the name of god, tho answered the doughter it is to me a great payne so long time to abide, neuertheles for the blessing of my father I shal ons atēpt him, but say me how I shall begin, ỹ mother said I vnderstande ỹ .he hath a lytell hounde that he loueth wel and kepeth his bed, cast the hounde with so grete might afore his face that it dy & if ye scape without a stripe or that he forgyue it lightely, in the name of god than loue the preest. Than sayde the doughter. I shal in al thynge do after your cōūsell, for there is no doughter

lyuynge to day that wolde more glad
ly haue the blessyng of the father and
the mother than I. And so she bad her
mother fare well, & went to her house
agayne, & that day wt greate importu-
nyte & trouble of herte she brought to
the night and whan the night was co-
men, she cõmaunded the bed to be coue
red wt pupure and wt clothe of golde
the whyles the knighte sate by the fire
And whan the bed was thus made re-
dy, the lytel hounde as he was accusto
med lepte on the bedde & she toke hym
by the hynder legges, and wt a wood
& a malicious herte she cast it agayn st
the wall that it lay styl dede, whan the
good olde knight that sawe, he was
meruelously angry, and sayd wyth a
loude voyce to hys wyfe. O worst
and most cruel of al wycked wymmen
how couldest thou finde in thyne hert
that lytell gentyl hounde to sle, that I
so moche loued. Lord sayd she haue ye

not sene howe the hounde wyth his his foule fete hath our bed that is soo precyously couered with riche clothes made foule compynge out of the myre: And the knyght sayde w̄ moch anger Knewe ye not that I loued moch better that lytell hounde than the bed. whan she herde that, anone she began petyously to wepe and sayd wo be to me that I was borne, For all thynge that I do for the best it is all tourned into the worste. The knight wold not suffre the weppynge and weymentynge of his wyfe, but for that he loued her so moche he sayed to her leue or cesse your weppynge for I forgyue you it al togother. And I counseyll you that ye be ware how that ye dysplease me frō hens forth. and they went togyther to bed. Upon the morowe she rose vp erly and went to the church where as she found her mother, to whome whan she had done reuerence as it behoued.

She sayd. Mother nowe wyl I loue ẏ preste. For I haue nowe attẽpted ẏ seconde tyme my husbond and all thynges he suffered. The mother sayd O my dere doughter ther is no cruelte or falshede aboue the cruelte of olde folkes, and therfore I counseyll you that ye yet ones proue him. To whom the doughter answered. Mother ye laboure in vayne, for yf ye wyst what and howe moche payne that I suffer for thee prestes loue ye shoulde rather helpe me yf ye loued me. The mother sayd. Here me doughter this one time and I shal neuer let you more. Thike howe that ye haue souked mylke of my brestes: and the greate payne that I suffred for you at your byrthe By these paynes my dere doughter I desyre of ⁊ I charge you ẏ ye deny me not this good petycion, and I promyse to god I shal nomore let nor hider you of your ẽtẽt, but rather help you therto

Tho answered the doughter, it is to me a grete payne to absteyne me and forbeare my selfe so lõge from the loue of the preest, neuertheless for the gret charges that ye haue layde to me, and also for that ye haue made a bowe no more for to lette me, but to further me, tell me how I shall attempte him, and I shall ones yet put it in aduenture. The mother sayd. I knowe well that on sonday next commyng he entẽdeth to haue vs al to dynner and there shal be your father and I and al your frẽdes and al the best of ỹ cyte. And whã ye are set in your place and all the metes are brought & serued vpon the table, caste one of the keyes preuely that hangeth at your gyrdell in the table clothe and than fayne to haue forgottẽ your knife and say thyse wordes openly. Se what a short wyt that I am of. I haue forgotten my knife in my chãber, & ryse vp hastely & go, & the cloth

wyth

with al the metes ye ſhal caſt downe & ouerthrowe vpon the grounde. And yf ye eſcape without payne I make a vowe to god ỹ I ſhal neuer let you after. The doughter ſayde that ſhall I gladly do and ſo toke her leue and departed .The feſte daye came that all as the mother ſayd were boden. The ſeruauntes made redy & couered ỹ table. All were ſet at the table,and the doughter ſate ouer agaynſt her lorde. And whan the table was well ſerued. with metes and other thynges as ther to belonged,ỹ lady of the houſe ſayde with an high voice.Se how forgetful I am of mynde I haue left my knyfe in my chamber the whiche I muſte fetche,& roſe haſtely vp & drewe the cloth with all the mete that was vpon it w̃ her,and all the golde veſſel and ſaltes laye vpon the ground. The knyght wexed ſore angrye in his herte,but for ſhame he dyſſympyled afore his geſtes,

and commaunded on other clene cloth & other metes to be brought and with Joy and myrth he solyted and meued his gestes to ete and make good chere so that by hym they were al gladed. The feste or dynner done they gaue al thankinges to the knight & toke their leue and departed euery man towardes his owne house. Upon the nexte day in the morninge the knight arose erly & went to the chyrche and herde a masse the whiche ended, went to a barboure and sayd to hym. Mayster are ye erperte in blood lettynge in what payne that I wyl delyre you. He said syr I am erperte in what payne that ye can name in mannes body. The knighte said. I am well contente come on with me, and whan he was comen to his house, he entred into his chāber where his wyfe laye in bed and sayde to her Ryse vp shortely. Than sayd she what shall I do vp thus erly it is not

yet

yet nyne the clocke. The knight sayd, ye must ryse vp, for ye muste be letten blode on both your armes. She sayd, I was neuer laten blode, and shall I nowe blede, Tho sayd the knight, that is trouth, and therfore ye ar afole. For thinke ye not that ye hewe kyst down my tree, and an other tyme, ye kylled my lytell hounde and yesterday ye shamed me afore all our frendes and parentes, and the fourth is if I shold luf fer you thus to go forthe ye shold me for euer confoũde and shame, the cause herof I consyder that ye haue euyll & wyld blode within your body. & therfore I wil that the corrupte blod shall be drawen out that ye from henforth shal no more put me to shame & angre and let to be made a grete fire, and she stode and cryed and helde vp her hondes towardes the heuen and sayde.

My Lorde forgyue me this trespace, and haue pyty vpon me at thys tyme,

and I shal neuer more offende you.
The knight sayd, pray for no mercye, for the mercy that god hath wrought without that thou holdest oute thyne arme strayte I shall sone haue thyne herte bloud. And he sayd also to ỹ barbour, smyte harde & make a depe hole in her arme, or els I shall giue you a grete stripe. Than smote the barbour so sore that the bloud came abundaũtly out, and the knight wold not suffer him to staunche it vnto the tyme that she chaunged coloure in her vysage. And as this was done the knight bad to be stopped or staũche ỹ vayne, and bad the barbour smyte the vayne vpõ the other arme. Then cried she wyth a loude voyce, Mi swete husbonde haue compassyon vpon me for nowe I dye. The knight answered my wyfe ye should haue afore thought on this or ỹ ye haue done to me these thre euill tournes or despytes. Then she helde

out

out her left arme, & the barbour smot therin an hole that the blod came out right hudgely, and suffred her to blede vnto the time that the colour in her visage chaunged and that she swouned Then sayd the knight, now binde that arme and staunche it, and sayd to her now go to bed and studye and thynke henseforth how ye maye amende youre selfe or els I shal drawe the bloode of your herte. And as this was done he gaue the barbour his rewarde and he wente agayne vnto his owne house, & the wyfe vnder the handes of hir maydens nyghe deed was ladde to hir bed and bad one of her handmaydens go to hir mother in al haste & say that she come speke with me afore I dye, The mother whan she hard ỹ she was glad of that correctyon of her doughter & hastely came to hir, the doughter whã she herd hir mother sayd to hir O my most swete mother I am almost dede,

for I

for I haue so moche bloud bled, that I beleue that I shal not scape ỹ deth. Tho answered the mother, sayd I not to you that old men are ryghte cruel and fel, wyl ye nowe loue the preiste, whych sayd. The deuyl may the preist confounde & shame. I wyl neuer loue other but my husbond. Than sayd the mayster to the emperour. Lorde haue ye vnderstande me, And he answered ryght wel. For amonges al other that euer I haue herde this was the beste example. Thre euyl dedes she ded vnto her husbonde, and I doute not but yf she had done the fourth she should shamed hym for euer. Than sayd that mayster therfore I counsell you that ye be beware of your wyfe leste that it happen worse to you, for why yf ye do to deth your onely sone for her wordes, ye shal be deceued in the end, and for euer ye shal forthynke it. The Emperour sayd truly master this day my

sonne

ſonne ſhal not dye. The mayſter ſayde My lorde I thanke you yͤ ye for mine example and my ſake this daye haue ſpared your ſonne.

¶ The fyfth complaynt of the Empreſſe.

The empreſſe hering that the chylde was not yet dede appatayled and cloethed her in her veſture or clothynge, & let to be ordeyned her waynes and cartes, as thoughe ſhe wold haue gone to her father home in her countre for to haue complayned of the greate ſhame that was done vnto her, & could haue no remedy herof. The ſeruaũtes ſeigeyͤ, went & ſhewed it to the emperour yͤ thẽpreſſe was goyng into her countre. Whan he that perceyued he went to her ſayinge, whither are ye goinge? I hoped that ye hadde loued me ſoo muche that in all the worlde ye ſholde haue

haue sought no solace but with me?
To that she sayd. That is true, & therfore I go from you, for I had leuer here of your death. than to se you dye, Wout doute ye delyte so moch to here these maysters, that it shall happen vpon you as it did to Octauian, themperour, the which was so coueytous that the noble men of the empyre buryed him quicke and fylled his mouth with molten gold. Themperour sayd. Dere wyfe do not that an other tyme the blame to you or to me myght be layde. Than sayd the empresse, trulye ȳ blame is yours. for haue ye not promysed me many tymes that your sone shold dye, & yet he liueth, & therfore frō henforth I wil no more beleue you.
Then sayd themperour, It be cometh not a kinge euery cause lightly to discusse. Wout aduyse, and specially vpō his sonne, vpon whom it is not behofe full lightly to gyue Judgement. And

therfore I ſaye and praye you that ye wil tell me ſomwhat by the whiche I maye my ſelfe gouerne, for it is vtter deſtruccion of a kinge wout aduyſe & vndeſcretly to gyue Iudgemēt She anſwered and ſayde. I wyl gladly tell you a notable example, ſo that from henſforth ye ſhal not be couetous or delyrous to here the maiſters. And began to ſaye in this forme

¶ The fyfth complaynt of the Empreſſe.

OCtauianus themperour reigned in Rome right ryche and couetous, and aboue al thinges he loued golde. The Citezyens ỹ tyme of Rome dyd moche harme and manye grete outrages to other nacyons. In ſo muche that dyuerſe nacyons & regions were meued and ſtyred agayenſt the Romaynes. In that tyme there was

was mayster Virgilius, the which ex
celled in magique and in other scyen
ces all other maysters. The cytezeyns
prayed hym that he by hys arte & cun
nynge woolde make somwhat by the
whyche they of their enemyes myghte
haue warnynge & knowledge oyfore.
Wherby that they mighte puruey
for them selfe the better. He lette doo
make by his atte and conning a tour.
and aboue vppon the toure dyd to be
set as many ymages as in al the wor
lde were regions and prouynces, and
in the middes of the toure he let to be
made and set an ymage whiche helde
in his hande an appell or a great roũ
de balle of golde. And euery ymage of
the toure helde in his hand a litle bell,
and stode turned lokynge towardes
his owne prouynce to him assigned.
And as oftentymes as onye prouince
would hyre or rebell agaynste the ro
maines, so oftẽ turned hym the ymage

of

of that lond, and range the bell. That heringe the cytezeyns of Rome armed themselfe, and to that prouynce yede with all their myght for that londe to kepe vnder, and so was there no londe so greate that coulde wreke them vpō the romaynes and therfore were they bedrad and fered ouer all the worlde. After that mayster Virgilius made for the solace and conforte of the pore people a lyght that waye brende, and by that light he made two bathes, the one of them hote, in the which the pore people might bathe and wasshe them, and that other colde in the which thei mighte theymselfe refresshe, betwix ẏ lighte and the bathes he made an ymage standinge, in whose forhed was writtē. He that smiteth me shal anone haue vengeaunce. Thys ymage stode there many yeres. At the last there came a clerke and behelde that ymage & radde

this writinge, and thought in himself what vengeaunce he might finde ther fore. I belue better that yf onye man sholde smyte the that thou fallest ther w̄ to the erthe, he shold finde̊ some tre soure vnder thy fete, and therfore is thy writinge that no man sholde haue it, and the clerke lifte vp his hand and gaue the ymage a great stroke that it fell to the ground and anone the light was out, and ye bathes were banished away, and he founde no tresoure. The poore folke that perceyuynge were all sorowfull sayenge, cursed mote he be for euer more. that for his synguler couetise hath destroyed this ymage. and vs hathe robbed of so great solace & comforthe. Here after assembled thre kynges the whiche of the Romaynes had ben oppressed and suffred greate wronges, and went to counseyll with the̊ of theyr counseill, how they might best of the Romaynes be auēged, and

some

some of thē sayd, we labour in vayne as long as there stādyth ꝑ tour w̄ the ymages we may nothyng do agaynst theym. To that counseyll arose vp. iiii knightes and sayd to the kynges, we haue thought a good remedy how ye shal destroye the toure with the ymages and that to do and bringe aboute we wyll oure lyues sette to pledge, yf that ye wyll do the coste. Tho sayd ꝑ kiges what cost shal we do. They sayd we must haue. iiii. tonnes ful of gold. Than sayd the kinges, take ꝑ gold & fulfilled your promyse. The knightes toke ꝑ gold & went towardes Rome, & whan they were thyther come. in the nyght without one of the gates in the dyche w̄ water they drowned one of ꝑ tonnes with the golde, and an other tonne they drowned bi the second gate and the thyrd tonne by the third gate and the fourth tonne by the fourthe gate they drowned. And whan they

had thus done erly in the morynge they entred into the Cytie at an houre conuenient whan themperour went ouer the marte, they dyd to him reuerence as it behoued. Themperour seynge them demaunded frome whence they were, or what science or what seruice that they cold do. Which answered, we are of farre countrees and we be sothesayers soo perfyte that there was neuer thynge so preuely or secretly hydde. but that we shall finde it be our remes, we haue herde, that ye labour and haue pleasure in such thynges, and therefore came we to you for to witte if ye had ony nede of our seruyce, Themperour sayd, I shal proue you & if it be so that I finde you true, ye shall haue of me greate rewardes and thanke, they said we aske nothyg but the halue dele for our reward of the golde that by vs shal be founden. The emperoure sayde, I am therwith wel

wel contente And thus had they with the emperour many wordes. At euen whan the emperour it was going to bed they said too him. My lord if it please you this nighte shall the oldest of vs set his comminge a worke and dreame, and the thyrd day we shal shewe you his dreme and what it sygnyfieth, the emperour sayde goo in gods name. And they went furth with great gladnesse, and all that nyghte they passed ouer with dereſions and mirth vpon trust that they sholde come to a good purpose, whan the thyrd day was comen they went erly to the emperour, and the firste of them sayde My lord pleseth you to go w vs wout one of ỹ gates of thy citie and I shal shewe you where as a tonne full of golde is hyd The emperour said. I shal go with you and se if it be true ỹ ye say. Whan they were come to ỹ place they drewe out ỹ tõne ỹ they ther afore had putte

The emperour whā he that sawe was gladde, and gaue to them their parte. Tho sayd the seconde dremer, my lord this nighte I shall dreame. Themperour sayd. god gyue you a good dreame, ¶ nexte nyghte cam he and toke out the other tonne, and gaue it to themperour, and toke him his dele. In like wyse dyd the thyrd, and the fourth, vpon the whych themperour was out of all measure ioyus and glad and sayd he had not sene afore so true & experte sothsayers or dreamers as they were, Then sayde they all togyther at ones as it had bene oute of one mouthe, my lorde we haue one after another dreame the whiche as ye haue sene be all true proued. But now yf it please you that we maye dreame altogether thys nighte, we truste that too vs shall bee shewed where we shall fynde a greate quantite or substaunce of goulde and of riches, the Emperour sayd god geue

to

to you a good dreame that to me and to you maye be profytable vnto the nexte morowe they came agayne vnto the Emperour & sayd to him wyth ioyouse and glad vysages or countenances, My lord we bring good and profytable tidinges, for this night in our slepes such & so great a treasure is to vs shewed the, which if ye wyll suffre it to be soughte, ye shal be so moch enryched yͭ in this world shable none to you lyke. The Emperour sayd, wher shold ye finde the horde or treasure. sayde, vnder the fundament of the Toure yͭ the Images stande on. The Emperour answered God defend yͭ I shuld for loue of golde destroye that Toure wyth Images wherwith that we oure enemyes be defended & warned. They sayde to hym agayne. My lorde haue ye founde vs in oure sayinges otherwyse then true and ryghtfull. The emperoure sayd nay. Morde sayde they.

we wyth our owne handes shall gette oute the gold without hurtynge of the tour or of the ymages. And it is expedyent that secretlye in the night by vs it be done, for drede of resorte and concours of the people leaste that ye sholde ren in the noyse & clamours of them, and also that thei sholde not take that good and golde away from you and vs. The Emperour sayde. Go in the name of god and do your beste, as ye well can, and I shall to morowe erly come to you. Tho went they with Joye and gladnesse, and in the nyght they were laten in to the toure, and wt grete haste and dylygence they vnder mynded it, and on the next daye erlye they mounted vpon their horses and rode agayne towardes theyr owne coũtre with ioy and glory. And or that they came wout the sight of rome, the toure fell downe on the morne ensuynge whan it was fallen, and the Se-

natours

natours it perceyued they sorowed gretely & there was a grct sorowe and bewaylynge throughout all the citie and went to themperour & sayd, Lord how maye it be that this tour is thus fallen, by the which we haue alwayes had warnynge afore of our enemyes. He answered and sayd, To me came foure fals deceuers and fayned themselfe to be foure sothsayers and that they coulde fynde treasoure hyd in the grounde. And they sayd that vnder þ foundacyon of the Toure was hid an vnnumerable some of gold, the which they shulde wel vndermyne without hurtinge of the toure or ymages, and I gaue sayth to them and they haue dysceyued me, they answered him, ye haue couepted so muche golde, and for your insacyate couetyse we shalbe al destroyed, but fyrst youre couetyse shal fal vpó your self, & toke & lad him vnto the capytoll, and laid on his bac

and poured his mouth full of molten golde, sayeng to him ye haue desyred golde, & therfore ye shal drynke golde and after they buryed hym quycke. Not long after that came ỹ enemies agaynst the Romayns, and ouercame and destroyed them al. Than sayde thempresse vnto themperour haue ye my lord this example wel vnderstād & he sayd eyght wel. Than sayed she. The toure w̄ the ymages is your body w̄ your .v. wyttes. as longe as ye lyue there none so hardy to trouble or make werre vpon you ne vpon youre people. That hath your sonne eyghte well vnderstonde with his .vii. maysters and with there false naracions or fables fynde how they may destroy you, for ye are ouermoche couetyse to here and enclined to thē, & in so muche that they shal vnder myne you & caste you vnder fote, and bryngе you to nought. The ymages are your fyue

wyttes

wytts ẏ be al lost. For these that ye be al chyldyshe or folyshe they shall destroy and sle you, and your sonne shal obtayne your empyre, Themperour sayd ye haue recyte to me a good exãple, wherfore it shal not to me happen as it dyde, with the toure but my son first this daye shalbe hãged. To whõ thempresse sayde, yf ye doo so ye shall fare well and lyue longe, Upon the next daye he commaunded him to be lad to hangynge, and as he was towardes the galowes lad, came riding agayenst hym vpõ an hors his fyfth mayster towardes the palays, & came before themperour and saluted hym wyth all reuerence, and he despysed his salutacion, and put hym in fere of his lyfe, and ẏ mayster sayd, My lord I haue not deserued to dye, and ye my salutacion despyse it is not your honour, for your sõne hath not with vs be of suche condycyons as ye repute

hym

him for, as ye in short tyme shal fynde, and that he speketh not is of his gret wysdome, and knowe ye that he shall well speke as ỹ tyme compyth, though that he nowe speke not as ye in shorte tyme shal here. But ye saye ỹ he your wyfe wolde haue shamed, that beleue not, for so wise a man as he is neuer sholde attẽte so shamful a dede. And ye put hym to death for your wyues wordes, ye should not scape without shame and vengeaunce. In lyke wyse as ypocras scaped not wout vengeaunce for the death of Ealienus his cosyne. The Emperour sayd ỹ wolde I fayne here and vnderstonde, The mayster sayd, what sholde auayle the narracyon to tell vnto you for youre prolyle, yf in the meane season youre sonne shold be hanged, and therfore yf ye wyl call agayne youre sonne and thereafter do as ye thynke beste it shal be at your pleasure. Themperour let

call

cal agayne his sonne & set him in pryson. And tho began the mayster to tell vnder this maner as foloweth.

¶ The example of the fyfth mayster.

SOmtyme ther was a famous phisycyon named Ypocras ryght connynge, the whiche exceded all other in connynge and science he had w hym his neuewe or kinnesman that was called Galienus, the whiche he loued moche. This Galienus was of an excellent wytte and applyed all his wit and mynde to lerne of his vncle the scyence of physyke. Whan ypocras aperceyued that in as moche as he cold hyde from hym his connyng ferynge that he shold excelle him in that craft for the greate wytte that he was of. As Galienus this sawe, he studied, & excersysed, in so much ẏ in short tyme he had perfyte connynge physyke, for the

which

whiche ypocras enuyed hym moche.
It hapned vpõ a tyme therafter, that the kynge of Vngary sent his messengers vnto ypocras that he shold come vnto hym his son for to cure or make hole. Ypocras excused hym selfe and wolde not go, but sent his cosyne Galienus with his writyngs in the company of the messenger for to excuse hym, And whan Galienus was comen afore the kinge he was right worshipfully receyued, but he merueyled why that ypocras wold not come, he excused him saying that he had many grete thinges to do that he might not come but he hath sent me in his stede, and with the helpe of God I shall make hole that childe. That pleased wel the kinge. Galienus went to the childe, & whan he had seene his vrine, and tasted his pounces, he sayd to the quene, O excellent princes I pray you here and suffer my wordes, & tel me who is

the

the father of this chylde. She ſayd. who ſhoulde be his father, but my lorde the kyng. Gallenus ſayd. I am ſure that he is not the father. She anſwered, yf ye wyll ſay that for a troth I ſhal doo your hed to be ſmytten of. he anſwered I ſay yet ones agayne ỹ this kinge is not the father and I am not therfore comen hyther to leſe my hed, for I haue no ſuche rewarde deſerued, & he was goyng his way. The quene that ſeyng ſpake. O good mayſter yf ye wyl kepe it ſecrete, & not diſcouer me, I ſhal ſhewe and open vnto you myne herte. The mayſter ſayed God defende that from me, that I to no perſone ſhold ſhew it and therfore o noble quene ſhewe it boldely to me for it ſhal neuer paſſe my mouth after, and I ſhall your ſonne eaſe and make hym hole. She ſayde yf ye doo that, ye ſhal haue of me a good reward, & therfore here what I ſhal ſaye. Of fortune

came

came hyther vnto mi lord, the kyng of of Burgondien, and he was so longe wt me conuersaunt, that this childe bi him I bare; Tho sayd the master, Fere ye not. I knewe wel that it was so by fore, and anone he gaue the childe to eate beefe or of an ore to drinke, and ỹ child was eased of his infirmite. And whan as the kinge herd that the child was quite of his malady he gaue vnto the mayster a good rewarde, but of the quene he secretly receiued and had a greter gifte and a specyal thanke. & went his way. And whan that he was comen home, ypocras his mayster demaunded of hym, haue ye ỹ chyld healed. and he sayd ye. Than asked he hi what he gaue to him, and he sayd. I gaue him flesshe of or beefe to ete, and water to drinke. Tho sayd ypocras Than is the mother of that chylde not true to her husbonde, that is trouth said galienus, Ipocras anone

was

was mened wyth enuye, and thought in him selfe. yf here be not found a remedy, my science shall no more be set by, and he shal be named and prayse aboue me. And from ỳ day forthward he thought & deuysed how he might slee him. Upon a day Ypocras called and sayd come go we to seke and gather herbes in the gardine. To whom he sayd mayster I am redy. And whan they were comen into the gardyne, Ypocras sayd. I fele that this herbe is right vertuous stoupe downe and gather me of it. Galienus did so, as they wēt aboute the gardine, sayd ypocras now knowe I well by the odoure of this herbe that it is better & precioser than golde, & therfore stoupe downe to the grounde & drawe him out with the rotes for he is right moche. Galienus bowed himself downe to plucke vp ỳ herbe ypocras drewe oute his knyfe & kylled hym. After that ypocras fyll

seke

seke to the dethe that the strengthes of his body fayled hym and dyd as moch as he cold to helpe hymself but it wold not be, and as his scolers & dyscyples herde of it they went hastly to hym, & al ỹ they myght or cold do for the prosite of his helthe they dyd, but it auayled hym nothinge. ¶ whan ypocras that perceyued, he sayd vnto his scolers. Goo and fetche me a grete tonne and fyll it full vnto the brinkes wyth water. And whan they had so done. he sayd to them make no we therin an hundred hooles, and whan that was done there wente none of the water oute. ¶ Tho sayd ypocras, Beholde my moste dere dyscyples, how that the vēgeaūce of god is fallen vpon me, as ye openly may se. For in this tonne are an hondred holes, and yet goth there out not one droppe. right so there commeth no vertue out of the herbes to helpe me, & therfore what ye do to me it helpeth

and gaue her agayne the ryng, & told her how the king had marked it & sene it on his figer, & prayed her if he made ony questions of the ryng ỹ she shold shewe it to him. This done, he wente downe agayne to his lodginge. And a none after that the kinge came to the Quene and she receyued him right louingly and after that a litel tyme was passed, the kynge sayd. My lady shew me where the ryng is that I gaue to you. I desyre to se it. O my lorde to what entent at this tyme desyre ye to se it. Than sayde he, yf ye shewe it not to me incontinent it shal repēt you. She rose anone vp and went to the cheste & brought the ryng to the kinge. And as he sawe the ringe, he was halfe asha med and sayd vnto her. O howe like is the knyghtes ryng vnto thys ring whyche I sawe vpon his fynger, and I beleued that it had ben my ryng, & therfore it was that I asked it of you

so hastely after the tynge. And of this euyll suspecyon I yelde my self gyltye agaynst you my dere lady in this behalfe, for the strength of the toure deceyued me. For I thynke that no manne myght come therin, but I my selfe alone. She sayde. My dere lorde, wonder not for one tynge is lyke an other, for werke mē make seldome ony werk but that other make the same, but god for gyue it you that ye haue me suspected, whan ye knowe the strength of ỹ Toure and the keyes ye haue alwaye by you, and byleue no man there with. After ỹ the knight let ordayne a great dyner and sayd to the kinge, My lord it is so that my ladye an loue is come out of my countre and I haue done to be made a feste or dynner. and gladlye I would praye you that at this tyme ye wyll do me honour, and take suche mete as is in my house, The king sayd I shall gladly do you ỹ worshyp and

more

moze. The knight was therof glad, & by his ſecrete way went to the quene & ſayd to her. My lady this daye ye ſhal come to my houſe by my pzyup waye, & clothe you in ryche clothyng after ỹ way of my countre, and ye ſhall ſyt at ỹ table w̃ the kynge as my ſouerayne lady, and make him good chere. She ſayd as ye wyll I ſhall in all thinges fulfill. and whan the houre of meate was come, and the kinge frō the caſtell was cominge towardes the Knightes houſe. In the meane tyme the quene entred by the ſecrete way into the knightes lodgynge and apparayled her after the maner of the knightes countre, & whan the kynge was entred into the houſe, ſhe ſaluted hym reuerently and receyued hym, and whan the kinge had beholden her he demaunded of the knighte, what woman is this that is ſo fayze. Thē the knight ſayd my lord it is my ſouerayne Ladye that no we

is come out of my countre after me. I haue taryed longe in her seruyce. Thē the knight set the kinge at the table as it behoued, and made the quene to sit by hym, and the kinge thought that it was his quene, and sayd within hymselfe. O how like is this woman vnto my wyfe, So the strength of the toure deceyued him, that he gaue more fayth & credence to ỹ knyghtes wordes than he dyd to hys owne agen. The quene began for to speke and talke vnto the kinge and to stire him for to eate and drynke and to make good chere. And as the king herde her voyce and speche thā he sayd to hymselfe. O blessed lady lyke is this woman vnto my quene, in her behauynge, in speche, in vysage, & in all other thynges and condycyons, and alwayes the strength of the toure fayled hym. In the ende of the mete, ỹ knyght prayed hys loue to synge a songe afore the kynge the whych begā

for

vnto them. My dere frendes. I praye you make not ouer greate haſte, for I thynke this day w the helpe of god to delyuer and ſaue hym from his peryll. And fro thens the mayſter haſted him towardes themperours palays and reuerenced him accordinge to his dute. But the Emperour with great malice and indignacion anſwered to him. Neuermore haue ye Joy me helth for that ye haue ſent my ſonne thus vntaught and dompe, the whiche that I delyuered vnto you wel ſpeking therfore ſhal ye all be hanged with him. The maſter anſwered. Syr the tyme is not longe betwyxte this and to morow none, and then by the grace of God ye ſhall here hym well, and wyſly ſpekynge, and vnto you the trouth ſaynge, and that I promyt you vpon payne of my lyfe yf ye wyl ſpare hym ſo longe, yf ye fynd it not ſo. Than ſayde the emperour, yf I

myght here my sonne speke it shoulde
suffyse me. I would desyre no lenger
to lyue. Then the mayster sayd, ye shal
se and here al this if ye wil abyde this
lytel time, & then shal openly be kno-
wen the dyscencyon & the stryfe that
hathe bene betwyxte vs and the Em-
pyresse, and than shal it be ended, and if
that ye do not call again your sonne,
but put hym to death for your wyues
wordes, it shall happen to you worse
than it dyd to a knyght that dyed for a
litell blod that he saw his wyfe bleue,
to a hō after she was right vnkinde.
Than sayd themperoure. That exam-
ple wolde I fayne here. Tho sayd the
mayster, let your sonne be called again
and I shal tel you so notable an exam
ple that durynge your lyfe ye maye be-
ware of the vntruthe and vnstedfast-
nesse of wommen. Then themperoure
sayd. I shall doo call my sonne agayn-
ne vpon a condycyon that to morowe

I shal here my sone speke, as ye haue promysed me. The mayster sayde do ȳ my lorde, for it shall soo be, and began to tell as hereafter foloweth.

The exampke of the seuenth mayster.

There was a knighte that had a fayre younge wyfe whom he entyrely loued, in so much ȳ he could not be out of her syght. It hapened on a tyme that they played together at ȳ chesse, and the knyght bechaunce held a knyfe in his hande and the playinge fortuned to smite her hand vpon the knife, that a lytle blode began to appere. Whan the knight sawe that hys wyfe bled, he sorowed much and was sore aferde of hys wyfe, that he fell to the grounde in a sowne, his wife caste colde water vpon his visage, that he a lytel came agayne to hym selfe & sayde lightly cal ȳ curate wt the holy sacra-

ment

mente for I must dye for the blod that I haue seen come out of your tynger hath smytten the death to my herte. The preest came and houseled hym. & anone after he dyed wythout ony taryenge, for whose death there was made great sorowe and bewaylynges, and specially of the wyfe, And after that ỹ obsequpes and buryeng was done accordyng. She went and laye vpon the buriel or graue, and ther she made the gretest sorowe of the worlde, and sayd that she wold neuer depart from thẽs but as a turtyll Doue she wold for the loue of her husbonde there abyde and daye. Tho went her frende vnto her & sayd what auayleth this for his soule to lyue and dye here it is better that ye go to your house and gyue almes for the loue of god & that shal more auayle his soule, than in this place to abyde. To whom she answerd be styll ye are tuyll coũselours. Consider not ye how

I am

I am fro him seperate and departed by his death, for a lytell bloude that he sawe come out of my honde or fynger and therfore I shall neuer fro hens departe, Her frendes herynge ỹ let make a lytell house or lodgynge nyghe vnto the graue, and put therin all thynges that to her was necessary & went theyr wayes thynkyng that wythin a while she shold be wery to be alone, and so desolate from al company. and that therby she sholde desyre agayne the company of people. In the cytie was then a lawe that whan a trespassour or offendour agaynst the lawe were hanged, that the shyrisse all ỹ night sholde watche and kepe the body all armed. and if it happen that the body of hym hanged were stolen away, the sheryfe sholde lese al his lande, and his lyfe at the kinges pleasure. It hapned sone after that the knight was dead a man to be hanged for trespasse that he had

done, so that the cheryffe after the law of the londe all the nyghte watched by the galowes that was not farre fro the cytie. and the chyrchyerde was not far from the walles of the same. Tho became the cheryffe so colde that he wyst not but to dye for cold, without the rather ꝑ he might warme hym, it was so feruent a cold, and so stronge a frost, and he beheelde from thens about hym and sawe the fyre in the churchyerde, & hasted hym and came therto & whan he was come he called and knocked at the lytyl house. The woman spake who is that, that at this houre is knocking at the house of this sorowfull woman. I am the chyrsse ꝑ so moch colde suffreth that wout anone ye let me in I shall frese to death. She sayde. If ferme yf that I let you come in ye sholde shewe me suche wordes that shoulde cause me for to be more heuyer, and he sayd I promyse vnto you that I shall

say

saye no wordes to your displeasure.
Then let she him in, and whan he a whyle had sitten by the fyre and was well warmed he sayed to her. O fayre woman ẇ your lycence wolde I faine speke but one word vnto you, She answered to hym, syr say what it pleaseth you. He sayd. O lady ye be a fayre gentyl woman ryche and yonge, were it not better and more conuenient for you to dwel at home in your house and to gyue almesse than to destroy and consume your lyfe here ẇ wepinges and cryenges, She sayd sir knight had I knowē this afore ye had not come here in, for I say to you, as I haue sayd to other oftentymes. Ye knowe well that my husbonde loued me so well that for a lytyll bloode ẏ he sawe me blede on one of my fyngers he is dead, wherfore I shal here die for the loue of him, As ẏ knight herd this, he toke leue & wēt to the galowes, & whan he was there

come, he sawe that the theefe ẏ he lefte there hangynge was stolen & caryed a waye, and begã therfore to wexe heuy and full of sorowe, and sayd, wo is me what shal I do for I haue lost my lyfe and al my good. And he goynge thus full of sorowe and heuynesse, and wist not whyche way to torne hym or to go at the laste he bethought hym to go to that deuoute and desolate ladye, and shew vnto hir the heuynes of his hart to wyte yf that she coulde gyue hym ony good counsell. And whan he was thether come he called, and she axed ẏ cause of his knockyng. Tho sayde he, madame I am the shiref that was here ryght now wyth you, and I wold feine shewe you the secretes of myne herte. Therfore I praye you for the loue of god open the dore, and he wente in & sayd to her. O most vertuous lady I come to haue your counseyll & aduise for ye knowe well the lawe of the lon-

des

des are that whan so euer ony man is hanged and stolen away of the galowes, than the sherike his lyfe and goodes be in the kinges handes. Nowe it is happened in the tyme that I was here with you & warmed me the theefe is stolen away from the galowes, therfore I pray you for ỹ loue of god giue me your aduyse what is me best to do She answered I haue cõpassion vpõ you, for by the lawe ye haue lost lyfe & goodes to the kyng. Do now after my counsell, and ye shall neyther lese lyfe ne goodes. He answered therfore I came to you hopinge to haue good comforth. She sayd wyll ye than promise to take me to your wife, ỹ knight answered, wolde god that ye wolde do that, but I fere me leste that ye wolde dysdeine so moch to humble you to me that am so poore a knight. She sayd I gyue you my wyll therto, and he gaue her agayne his wyll and consented to

be her knight durynge his lyfe. Tho sayd she, ye knowe wel that such a day my lorde was buryed whyche for the loue of me dyed, take him out of his sepulture, and go hange him in stede of the theefe. The knight answered ladye your counseyl is good. Tho went they together and opened the graue and drewe him out. The knight sayd how shal we now doo, by cause of the theefe was taken, two of his vpper teth were smitten out, and yf ere me yf that were perceyued I shold be dead. She sayd to hym, take a stone and strike out .ii. of hys tethe. The knight answered, madame that may not do for while he lyued he was my well beloued felowe & it shold be to me a great rebuke. yf I compytted so dysloyall a dede vnto his body beynge dede. She answered for your loue I shall do it, & toke a stone and smoke out two of his teethe, and sayd to the syrieffe, take him and hang

him

him vpon the galowes lyke to ỹ theefe. The knight ſayde I feare me to do it, for the theefe in takinge of hym was wounded in the head, and wãted both his eres, and therfore if it were ſerched and foũde otherwyſe, it ſhold be to my vtter vndoynge. Than ſayd ſhe, take out your ſweard and made him a grete wound on his head, and cut of his eres O madame god forbyd that I do that to the dead bodye that I loued ſo well in his life. Thã ſayd ſhe, gyue me your ſworde and I ſhall for the loue of you do it, and toke the ſwerde and ſmote a manly ſtroke vpon the dead marnes forhede and cut of bothe his eres. And whan ſhe hadde thus done ſayd. Now take and hange him without company, and than the knight anſwered, yet I fere me to hãge him, for ỹ theef wãted both his ſtones, & if ỹ were ſerched and founde wythout all our laboure were in vayne. Then ſayde ſhe. I ſawe neuer ſo feerfull a man ſeynge

the matter so clere and sure. Take a knife and cut of his stones. And he answered, that may I not do in no wyse and therfore I pray you spare me, and ye knowe well what a man is woute his stones. She sayde for the loue of you I shal do it. And toke the knife in her hande and cut of her husbondes stones & to him, nowe take this churle thus disfigured and hange hym vp wt out drede. And went forthe together, & hange vp the body vpon the galowes and so was the shireke delyuered oute of the kinges daunger. Tho sayde the lady, now be ye quyte of all your dañgeours and fere and all thy sorowes by my counseyl. And therfore I wyll ye ye wedde me in the face of the churche. The knight sayde I haue made a vowe that I shall neuer wedde other as longe as ye lyue, which I wyl hold but afterwarde he sayd. O thou most shameful & worst womañ of al wymmen

who

who woulde take thee to his wife. An honourable and a louing knight was thy husbonde, which for a litle blode þ he saw of thy fynger shed, dyed, nowe hast thou smitten out two of his teth, thou hast cut of hys eres, & hys stones and thou hast made him a great woũd in his hede, what deuyl wolde wed the and bycause þ thou shall neuer shame moze good man. I shall rede the, and drewe his swerde, and w̃ one stroke he smote of her hede. The mayster sayde. My lord haue ye vnderstande what I haue sayd. The Emperour sayd, right wel. Amonges all wommen was this the wozste, and the knight rewarded her accordyng, so as she shold no moze men shame. And thẽperour sayd moze ouer. O my good mayster myght I ones here mi sonne speke I shold gyue no charge of my lyfe. Tho sayd the mayster, To mozow ye shal here him speke afoze you and afoze all the lozdes of

the

the Empyre, and he shal shewe the very trouth of al ỹ variaũce betwixt vs and the Empresse as I hope, and toke his leue of themperour and departed.

¶ How that Dyoclesyan the Emperoure sonne complayned on the Empresse, & how that he excused him of her complaynte.

AND after that all maysters assẽbled together and toke theyr coũseyll howe and in what manner they shold bryng out the child of pryson and lede to the pvlays, and tho thet went to the child there as he lay in prison afore the mydday his wyll and his counseyll to here. To whome the child sayd, what that shall please you, shall please me, but in no wyse besy you not howe that I shal answere, or what I shall saye, for w Joye I shall answere to all thynges that shalbe demaunded of me, whan the seuen maysters herde

that

that they were right glad, and clothed him in purpure and in clothe of gold, & two maysters went afore him, and one on his right hand, an other on his lifte hande, and the other thre folowed him after, and afore thē all went .xxtiii. men wt diuerse instrumentes of musik & brought him with greate melodye & honour to the Palays. And whan the Emperour herde al this melodye, he demaunded what it was. Then it was tolde hym, Syr emperoure it is youre sonne, the whiche commeth to fore you and afore al your lordes to speke & excuse himselfe of all thinges ẏ are layd to his charge. Themperour sayde, that is good tidinges mighte I here my sonne speke. And whan the chyld was come to the palays he ranne vnto hys father and sayd vnto him, hayle father and my moost honourable. And whan the Emperour herde the voyce of his sonne he was so glad ẏ for Joye he fell

dowue to the erth, but the chylde toke hym lyghtly vp agayne, and whan he was come agayne to hymselfe. Tho be gan the sonne for to shewe his matter, and there came so grete multytude of people that the Joye and noyse of thē was so grete that the chylde could not be herde. The Emperoure considering that, let money to be cast vpon the stre tes that the people therwith sholde be occupyed and auoyded out of the pa lais, and they might the better here the chylde speke, but the folke toke no re garde after the money. Themperoure perceyuyng that made to be commaū ded sylence vpon payne of their lyues and whan they were all styl the childe began to say. O my most dere father a fore ỹ I ony thynge say: I be seche & pray you that thempres wal her chā ber maydens may come & be present. A none thēperour cōmaūded thempresse wt al her chāber maydens to come wt oute

oute delay. She beinge in great feare, came wyth al her maydens, & the child cõmaunded thẽ to stande before all the people in a rowe that they myght se them. Then sayd the childe to themperour, Syr lyfte vp your eyen and beholde the chamberer that there stãdeth in grene clothynge, the which ye know the Empresse aboue all other loueth beste, whom ye commaunde to be vnclothed vnto her naked body afore vs al to se what she is, Themperour sayd My dere sone it sholde shame vs all a woman to stande naked afore vs. He sayd, yf it be a woman it is my shame, and yf not let the shame abyde in her, whan the chamberer was vnclothed, they sayd al it was a man, and so it appered in the nether partes wherof they wondred all gretely.

¶ The declaracion of the complaynte of the Emperours sonne on the Empresse.

Then

Then sayd the sonne vnto the fa
ther, beholde this rybaude that
many a nyghte hath with youre wyfe
lyen in your chambér in auoutry, and
haue defouled your bed, and therfore
the Empresse loued him so well, the
whiche ye knewe not. whan the Empe
rour sawe that, he was impacient and
wroth, that he commaunded that she
with the rybaude sholde be brent, the
sonne sayde, lorde father make no hast
of that iudgement before that I haue
reproued her of the cryme, that she laid
vpon me falsely, and that she vntrulye
and falsly hath complayned and lyed
vpon me. Tho sayde the father. My
dere sonne I commite al the iudgement
into your handes. The sonne answe-
red yf she be found false and a lyer the
law shall iudge her. But my dere fa-
ther whã ye sent after me at ỹ instaũce
of hir, then I with my maisters beheld
the sterres in the firmamente and ther

we

we sawe that yf I should speake onye worde wtin seuen dates I should haue died a shameful death, and therefore ẏ was the cause that I spake not. And where as the Empresse sayde and put vnto me, that I wolde haue oppressed and rauyshed hir, in that she lieth fals-lye, but she did hir best to haue caused me to do it. And whan she in no wyse could bringe me therto, she toke me paper penne and ynke, and bad me write the cause why that I refused her. And whan that I had writen that I would not do or committe so greate and abhominable synne. and also wolde not my fathers orcharde defoule, Tho began she to tere hir clothes and scratche her vysage that it ran on blode, and cryed with a loude voyce, and committed vnto me the cryme or blame. And whan the Emperoure herde this he behelde her wt a fell coũtenaunce & sayd to hyr in this maner. O ẏ wretched woman

was

was it not sufficient to fulfil thy foule and lecherous appetyte I and thy ry-baude, but woulde also haue had my sonne. Than kel the Empresse to the emperours fote and she cryed hym mercy. Then the Emperoure sayde. O thou cursyd and most vnhappye woman, ye askest forgeuenesse and thou art worthy none to haue, for thou haste deserued to dye in thre maner wyse. The first is that thou hast done aduoutrye The seconde is that thou hast prouoked and styred my sonne to synne and haste to him committed, and layde the crime falsely and vntruly. And the .iii. that thou hast euery daye entyced and prouoked me wyth thy false tales for to put hym to dethe. & therfore ỹ lawe shal haue the course vpon the, & iudge the to the death. Then sayd the sonne. Father ye know wel, that for the lesing that she lied vpon me. I was daily lad to hangynge. But god with the helpe

of

of my mayſters hath delyuered me. O my moſt honorable father, it was ſaid vnto you bi the Empreſſe that I wold alſo by the helpe of my mayſters depoſe you out of your Empire, and that I laboured to dyſtroy you, and for to ſet me in your place, ſholde not ye than haue ſorowed, ye haue the Empyre, to gouerne, and wherfore ſhoulde I not holde you for my father. God defende that for of you I haue my liuing, and I ſhal holde and repute you for my ſouerayne lorde and father durynge the terme of my life. And I will not in ony maner depryue you of your honoure, but I ſhall laboure and helpe my ſelfe aboute the gouernaunce of the ſame, and all your commaundementes I ſhall fulfill, in euery thyng. But it is in lyke wiſe as ỹ father caſte his ſonne into the ſee for to drowne him, becauſe he ſayd that he in tyme comynge ſhold be his lorde, and yet the ſone by ỹ help

of god was saued, & was made a gretter lord than he was, and yette was it no hinderaūce to the father but prousyte. Also ye shoulde se and remembre that my life and gouernaunce shal neuer hinder you but it shal be to youre great solace and Joye. Than sayd the Emperoure, blessed be almyghty god and the houre that I euer begate you and deserued to haue suche a sonne ỹ I kynde so wyse and good in all thynges. Tell me nowe an exaumple by the whiche I maye parfytly thy wisdome vnderstande, and that myne hert may the better Joye in the. Then sayde the sonne first commaund sylence to your people that I be not letted in my wordes tyll ỹ I haue done. And whan ỹ it is ended, giue sentence w̄ the rightwisnesse of the lawe vpon me and vpon the Empresse. Tho commaunded the Emperoure silence, and the child began to tell in maner as here after foloweth.

The

¶ The example of Dyocleſyan the Emperours ſonne.

THere was a knight which had but one ſonne ỹ he loued right muche in begynnynge as ye nowe all onely haue me, whome he delyuered to a mayſter of farre countres to norysh and to lerne, that chyld was of a grete wytte and prouffyted much and grew as well in lerninge as in bodye. And whan he had dwelled with his maiſter ſeuen yere, his father deſyred to ſe him and ſent letters to him that he ſhoolde come againe into his countre & viſyte his frendes in lykewyſe as ye haue ſente for me. The child was obediente to his father and came at his commaũdement of whoſe commyng he Joyed muche, for that he was as well growē in his members as in doctryne. To euery man he appered pleaſaunte and Gentylle. It happenned vppon a day

daye that the father and the mother sit tynge at the table, and the chylde sertuyng them. A nightyngale came flee-ynge afore the wyndow where as thei satte, and began for to syng so swetely that they merueyled. And the knyghte sayd. O how swetelye this byrde syngeth, well were hym that could vnderstande his songe, and could shewe the interpretacion therof. Then the sonne sayd, my worshypfull father the songe of the Nightyngale I could well declare, but I fere your displesure. The father sayd, say hardelye my sonne the interpretacyon of the byrde, and than ye shall proue whether I shall be angry or not, but I shall marke well the reason of myne angre, and whan the sonne herde that he sayd, the nightingale hath sayd in his song, that I shal become a greate lorde, that I shal be honoured and worshypped of all men, & namely of my father, the whiche shall

brynge the water for to wasshe in mīn handes, and my mother shal holde the towell. The father sayd thou shalt neuer see that day suche seruyce of vs to haue, nor none suche dygnite shall folowe the, and in greate malyce & wodenesse he toke his sonne vpon his shold ders and rāne to ẏ see and cast him in it, and sayd, Lye there the interpretatour of the byrdes songe. The childe coulde swymme, and swymmed to a londe where he was foure dayes wyth out meate or drinke. The fift day ther came a shyp saylynge, and as the child sawe that, he called a loude to the shipmen, and sayd, for the loue of god deliuer me from the perill of death. The shypmen saw that it was a fayre yong man they had compassyon on him and went with their bote & fette him abord and into ferre coūtrees with them they led him, and sold hym there to a duke, The chylde grewe goodly and fayre, &

the duke loued hym moche, and hadde him gretely in his fauour. Upō a time the kynge of that realme let calle and assemble all the greate lordes and noble men of his londe to a generall coūsell. This duke prepared and ordayned hym to go to the counsel, and marked the wysdome and the wytte of the childe and toke the childe with hym. And whan they were all gadred and assembled before the king in his counseyll. My welbeloued lordes and frendes sayde the kinge, wyll ye wete the cause wherfore that I haue called you to this counseyl Then sayd they al we be all souerayne lord at your commaūdemente. Then the kynge sayd. It is a secrete matter that I shall shewe you, yf ỹ ony man can open it, and declare what that it signifieth. I swere and promit vnto hym by my crowne that I shal gyue to hym myn only doughter in mariage, & he shall be my felowe

in

in my realme durynge my lyfe, and af-
ter my deathe he shal haue and possesse
al the hole kyngedome and the myste-
ry of the counseyll is this. Thre rauōs
alwayes folowe me where so euer that
I goo, they leue me not, but cry wyth
suche horryble voyces, that it is grete
payne for me to heare them: and to be
holde theyr lokynges, and therfore yf
ther be ony man the whiche that kno-
weth the cause of theyr folowynge, &
can shewe what they mene by theyr cri-
enge and voyde them fro me, without
doubte I shal fulfyll this promyse ȳ
I haue made, & as the kinge had thus
sayd, there was none founde in all the
counseyll that wyst the cause or could
moue or put awaye the rauons. Then
sayde the chylde to the duke. My lorde
thynke ye that the kyng wyll hold his
promyse or worde yf I accomplyshe
his wyll and desyre. Than the Duke
sayde I thynke he will holde ȳ he hath

promysed, but wyll ye that I gyue the kynge knowledge of you what ye can do. Then the chyld sayd. I wyl my life set in pledge and I shall performe & make it good that I haue sayde, whan the Duke herde that, he went to the kinge and sayde. My lorde the kynge, here is a yonge man that is ryght connynge and wyse, the which promyseth for to satysfie and fulfyl in al thynges your desyre as touchynge the rauons, yf ye wyl fulfil that ye haue promised, The kyng swore by the crowne of his kingedome what I haue promysed in al thinges shalbe fulfilled. Tho brought he the chylde before the kynge, and whan the kinge sawe hym he spake to hym. O fayre chylde can ye gyue answere to my questyon. The chyld sayd My lorde ye in the best wyse, your questyõs wherfore ỹ the Rauõs folow you & horrybly cry vpon you. To which I answere. Vpõ a tyme it hapned ỹ two

rauons

rauons a male & female had brought forthe betwene them the third rauon, vpon the sayd see was so grete famine and scarsyte of all maner of thynges ẏ men beastes and foules dyed and perished for defaute. The thirde Rauon ẏ tyme beynge yonge in the nest the mother lefte it sekinge where she myghte best get her lyuynge, and came nomore to the neste. The male Rauon seynge that with greate penurye and laboure fed the yonge Rauon tyll that he was able to flye, and whan the dere tyde was passed and gone then the female Rauon came agayne to the yonge Rauon and wold hold felysschippe and cōpany with him. And as the male rauon sawe that, he woulde haue driuen her away, sayinge thus, ẏ she in his great myscheyfe and necessyte lefte hym and his company, & therfore now she shold wante his company and feloschippe. She alledgid and sayd that she had in

his

his birthe great labour and sorowe, & suffred penurye, And therfore of hys company she sholde rather Joye than the father. For this my soueraine lord they solow you asking the ryght iudgment whych of them both shall haue ȳ ponge Rauon in theyr companye, and this is the cause of theyr horryble clamour & noyse ȳ they make dayly vpō you. But my lorde had ye here vpon a ryghtwysse sentence gyuen ye shold neuer more see theym or be troubled with theyr cryenge. Tho sayd the king for the cause that the mother hath left and forsaken the ponge rauen in his moste necessyte, it standeth with reasō and iustice that she shal wante and be without his felishyp. And where that she sayth and alledgeth that in the bearynge & byrthe of hym she had greate payne and trauayle, that helpeth her not, for that payne was torned into ioy as sone as she sawe the ponge Rauen

in

in the world. But for that the male is the cause of production and generacion in euery beste, and also that he the ponge Rauon in his necessite sustayned and fedde into the recouerynge and nourysshyng of his bodye, therefore I gyue for a iudgemente and for a sentence diffinitpue that the ponge Rauen shal abyde and hold company with the father and not with the mother. And whan the rauons herde this sentence, with a greate noyse and crye they flewe vp in the ayre and were no more seen ne founde in al that Region. whan that this was done the kyng demaunded of the ponge man what hys name was. He answered I am called Alexander. Tho sayd the kinge, I wil haue one thyng of you, ye from hens forth shal name & take me & none other for your father but me, for ye shal marry my doughter, & ye shal be possessour of all my realme. The ponge Alexander

abode

abode and dwelled styll with the king and euery man had to hym fauour and loue, for he began to haunt and occupi hymselfe in tustes and tourneys, wher in at all tymes he had the pryse aboue al other that were in al Egipte, so that his pere or lyke was not founde, & ther was not so harde nor so obscure a que styon put vnto hym, but that he could assoyle it. At that tyme was there an Emperoure named Cytus, that excelled in gentylnesse curtesy & curuosyte of all other Emperours kinges and princes in the worlde. In so muche ỹ suche a fame and noyse slew and cãne ouer all the worlde of it, that whatsoeuer he was that woulde prouffyte in connynge maners or behauynge, that he sholde go to the Emperours courte And whã alexander herd ỹ he said to ỹ kynge. My most honourable father & lorde ye wote wel that all the worlde is full of the fame of the Emperoure so ỹ

it

it is delectable to abyde & dwel in hys courte wherfore if it pleaſe you my Lorde and father I woulde gladlye go to his courtthat I might be wyſer and prompter in maners and behauig than I am. There vpon anſwered the kinge. It pleaſeth me tyght well, but I would that ye take with you plente of golde and ſyluer and other neceſſaries, ſo muche that ye myne honoure therwyth maye laue, and that ye maye haue alſo that is to you requyſyte and behouefull. And alſo me ſemeth it were expedyent that ye afore your departynge ſhoulde marye my doughter. Tho anſwered Alexāder will it pleaſe you my Lord to ſpare me at thys time and at my commynge home agayne I ſhall wedde hir wyth all honoure as to her appertaynyth. The kynge anſwered, ſythen it is your wyll to go to the Emperours court, I lycence you, and therto I conſente. Alexander toke leue

of

of the kynge, and toke with him treas-
sour ynoughe and wente to the empe-
rours courte. And whan he was come
with a fayre compayne, he wente afore
the Emperoure and fell on his knees,
and saluted him and did him reuerẽce.
The emperoure rose vp frome his sete
imperyall and kissed him, and asked of
him of whens and what he was, and
wherfore he was cõmen. He answered
and sayd I am sonne and heyre to the
kynge of Egipte, and am come to doo
seruice to youre mooste highe maieste
yf it please you to accepte me,
The Emperour said that he was right
welcome, and committed him to his
stewarde, and made him his keruer.
The stewarde ordeyned hym a fayre
chamber and purueyed hym all thin-
ges that were necessary to ỹ same. and
alexander behaued him so well & wyse
ly ỹ in shorte tyme of al people he was
beloued, not lõge after ỹ came ỹ kiges
sone

lo nne of Fraũce to do seruise to thẽpe-
rour to lerne nurture, whome thẽpe-
rour receiued honourably and demaũ
ded his name and of what kynred he
was come. He answered I am sonne to
the kynge of Fraunce, and I haue to
name Lodwyke your seruaunte. Tho
sayd the Emperoure I haue made A-
lexander my kartuer, and ye shal be my
cuppe berer, that alwayes ye shall do
seruyse afore me at my table, and com-
maunded hys stewarde to assygne him
a lodgynge, whome he assigned wyth
Alexander in his chamber. These wer
so lyke in stature in vysage, and in con
dycyons that vnneth ỹ one myght be
dysserned fro the other, but ỹ Alexãder
was more in commynge lyghtlier in his
dedes thã Lodwike was for Lodwik
was a kempynyne man and shamfast, a
these two yong men loued well togy-
ther. This Emperour had a doughter
onlye named Florentyne, the wyche

was

was right kayre and gracious, & chuld be his heyre whome he loued entyerly, which had a courte by her selfe and seruauntes to her assyned. To whom the Emperour euery day was accustoined to sende from his table of his deyntes, in tokenynge of loue by the hand of alexander, wherupon the doughter began to haue him meruaylously in her fauoure bycause of hys wysdome and his gracious demenure. It hapned vp on a day alexāder at the mete tyme had such a busynesse that he serued not at the table nor none other gaue attendance for him in his rowme. Lodwik perceyued that and serued in his stede. And whan he had serued the Emperour in his laste seruice vpon his knee, the Emperoure commaunded hym to bere a dysshe vnto hys doughter as he was wont to do, thynkinge him to be Alexāder. Tho toke Lodwik ỹ dysshe and yede to the palays of the Emperours

tours doughter and saluted her with great reuerence & set the mete afore her but vnto ỹ time he had not seen her, she perceyued anone that it was not alexander, and sayd to him in this manere what is your name and whose sonne are ye, and he answered to hir and said Madame I am the kinges sonne of Fraunce, & my name is Lodwik. She sayd I thanke you of your labour, and he toke his leue and departed. In the meue time came Alexander to the table and they fullfylled theyr seruyce. The dyner done anone Lodwyk went to his bedde sore seke, And alexander perceyuynge that went to his chamber & sayd to him, O my best beloued frend and felowe Lodwyke howe is it with you, and what is the cause of your infirmite. He answered hym and sayde, ỹ cause of it I knowe not, but I fele me so sycke ỹ I fere me I can not escape ỹ deth. Alexãder sayd the cause of your

infirmite and disease I knowe well. For to day whan as ye bare the meate vnto the Emperours doughter, ye beheld her vysage and beaute so feructly, that your herte is taken and rauysshed with her loue. Therupon he answered O Alexander al the philicians in the worlde coulde not more truely iudge my sykenesse, but I see it shall be my deathe. Then sayde alexander, Be of good comforth and I shal helpe you vnto my power, and whent vnto the market and bought with his owne money a fayre clothe sette wyth precyous stones, vnknowynge to Lodwike and presented it on his behalfe vnto the mayden as she sawe that she asked him where he might that costelye and precyouse clothe finde to bye, & he sayd Madame it is the sonne of the mooste christian kinge that sendeth it vnto you for your loue, for he but for one sight that he hath had of you is so sicke

that he lyeth vpon his bedde vnto the deathe, and therfore yf ye suffre him to perysshe ye shall neuer recouer agayne youre honoure. Tho sayde she. O Alexander wolde ye this counseyll me that I shuld so lese my virginite, god defend that, and be ye sure Alexander that of suche messages ye shall neuer more haue ne wil thanke, therfore go ye out of my syght and speke no more therof to me, whan Alexander herde that he dyd his obeysaunce and departed, the next daye Alexander wente agayne to the citie and bought a chaplet ꝑ was two tymes more in value thā the cloth and therwith he yede to the maidens chā ber and gaue it to hir on the behalfe of Lodwyke. And whan she sawe that costelye gifte she said vnto him in this maner, I marueyl of you ꝑ so often ti mes as ye haue seen & spoken vnto me, ꝑ ye haue not done your owne erande or spokē for your selfe, but for an other.

Thē he answered. O madame I haue not ben so disposed, bycause that my birth is not to be cōpared with yours. And also it happened me neuer such a case that my harte was so wounded, & he that hath a good felowe is bounde for to do him good and true felisshyp, and therfore moost excellent pryncesse of your most habundaunte pice haue compassion vpon hym and make hym hole that ye haue so wounded vnto the deth that it be not for euer layde vnto your crueltie and impyteouse hert, she answered him. go your wayes for at this tyme I wyll gyue you none answere therof. And as he herde that, he toke his leue and departed, And the thirde daye he went vnto the market and boughte a girdell that thre tymes was more in value and costelyer than the chaplet was, and presented it vnto her on the behause of Lodwike. And whan she sawe and behelde that so pre

cyouse

clouse, she sayde vnto Alexander. Say to Lodwyke that he come to my chamber aboute the third hour in the nyght and he shal fynde the dooze open. and Alexander herynge that he was glad. and went to his felowe and sayd. My best beloued felow be ye of good comforth, for I haue conquered the mayden vnto you, and in this night I shal bring you vnto her chamber. And whā that was sayd, he stert vp as thoughe that he had wakened out of his slepe & was well reuyued and for great ioy he was made all hole, and the next nighte folowinge Alexander toke Lodwyk & brought hym vnto the chamber of the ladye wyth whome he was in solace & Ioye al the night, & so that tyme forth al hir hert was vpon him so that there was but one loue betwixt them bothe. And after that Lodwyke vsed her of tentymes to vysyte, so that it came by processe of tyme to the eres of the Kni-

ghtes of the courte, how that the Em-
perours doughter was knowē by Lod
wike: and conspyred amonges them
selfe how that they might him therof
al finde, and him to take or sle, as Alex
ander had knawledge therof, he armed
hym to withstand them. And whā the
knightes vnderstode that they sering
alexander suffred hys felowe to go in
peas, & Alexāder many tymes put him
selfe in ieoperdye for hym, he not kno-
wīg therof, but ꝑ mayde knew it well.
In shorte tyme after ꝑ there came let-
ters to Alexander of the deathe of the
kynge of Egypt that he shold haste lye
come and receyue hys kingdome with
honour and ioye, and that shewed he
anone to the mayden and to Lodwyke
and also of hys departynge, whereof
they were sorowfull and heuy. he sayd
also vnto the Emperoure. My moste
redoubted lorde please it you for to vn
derstande that I haue receyued let-

ters

ters of the deth of my father, wherfore it behoueth me to goo and receyue the kingdome, and that ye wyl lycence me to depart, and for all benefites so done I offre my self and al my goodes, and rather then I shold by my goynge awaye offend or displease you my lord I shal forsake all my Realme and all that I haue in the worlde, and abyde with you styll. Then sayde the Emperoure, knowe ye for certayne that of your departynge I am right heuy for ye were vnto me the beste seruaunte that was in al my house. But it becometh not an Emperoure to lette hys seruauntes frome theyr promocyons, or auauncementes, but soner to promote them vnto hygher and greater honoure. Therfore go ye vnto our treasourer, & he shall delyuer you as much gold as ye wyl haue, and in the name of god and with my blessynge go into youre countre, and thus Alexander

had leue of the Emperoure and bad farewel, and many of the courte were sorowfull of his departynge, for of al he was beloued. Lodwik w the mayden brought him on his waye well seuen myle. After that alexander wolde not suffre them to go further, then fell they bothe to the grounde for greate sorowe and Alexander toke & lyfte thō both vp agayne from the erthe, and cōforted them with fayre and swete wordes and sayd. O Lodwyk my most beloued felow, I warne you that the secretes beinge betwirt you and my lady, ye hyde them and kepe them as preuelye as ye may and take good hede to all thynges. For I wote an other shall come and be in my stede, that shall entre you of the fauoure & grace that ye stande in with the Emperoure and day and nyght shall lie in a wayte to take you wyth a faute, and to put you to a rebuke. Then answered Lodwyk and

said

sayde. O Alexander I shalbe ware as moch as to me is possible, but how shal I nowe do whan I wante your company, therfore one thinge I shal desire of you that ye wyll take this ringe of me for a remembraunce. Then sayde he I shal for the loue of you gladly receyue the Rynge, and yet shold I neuer wythoute the Ringe forget you, and committed them to god. Then they embraced eche other aboute the necke and kissed, and so departed from other Not longe after ỹ the kinges sõne of Spayne named Guydo was receyued of the Emperoure in the roume and place of Alexander, to whome the stewarde assigned Alexanders place and chamber, whiche was fore agaynst the will of Lodwyke, but he coulde not amende it, Guydo perceyuynge ỹ Lodwyk agaynst his will had him in his felishyp, anone he toke and had enuye agaynst him, so that Lodwyke of a

loug

lōg time for feare of ẏ sayd guido kept him out of the cōpany of ẏ said mayde Neuerthelesse afterwarde ouercomen wt the loue of the mayden, sōtyme hanted and went againe to hir as he afore tyme had done. Guydo shortly perceynynge awayted so longe therupon, ẏ he the trouthe knewe, and was therof in surety that the mayden was by lodwyke knowen and had accompanyed with him. Upon a tyme it happened ẏ the Emperoure stode in hys halle and praysed gretely Alexander of his gentylnes and wysedome. That herynge, Guydo sayde. My lorde he is not soo muche worthy to be commended as ye wene for he hath ben a longe whyle a traytour in your house, then the Emperoure sayde telle me howe. Guydo sayd, ye haue but one doughter onlye, the whiche shalbe your heyre, and that Lodwyke hathe defouled and lyen by hir by the helpe of alexander: and he

goethe

goeth to hir euery nyght whan it plea
ſeth hym, and whā the Emperour herd
that he was ſore meuyd and wexed an
gry, and it happened Lodwyke vpon
the ſame time to come through the hal
and whan the Emperour ſawe him be
ſayd, what here I of the thou euyl and
vntrue body, yf it be founde and pro
ued true thou ſhalt dye the moſt ſhame
ful death that can be deuyſed. Lodwik
ſayd, My Lorde the Emperoure what
is the cauſe. Guydo anſwered, I ſaye
and depoſe here afore my lord againſt
the that thou haſte defouled his onlye
doughter, and euery nyght thou goeſt
to hir and doeſt fornycacyon with her
and that in batayle I ſhall proue and
make good vpon thy bodye wyth my
body. Then ſayde Lodwyke I am in
nocent and not defectyue in the crymes
and falſelye thou putteſt that and
layeſt vpon me, and therupō I holde ȳ
batayle, for I truſt in god thu falſched

ſhal come

come vpon thym owne hede. Then the Emperoure assygned them the daye of batayle & fightinge. That done Lodwyke wente vnto the mayden & shewed to her the cause of the day of batayl by the Emperoure assygned, & in what maner Guydo had hym accused, & said to her. Nowe it behoueth me to haue your counseyll, or els I must deye for why as ye know it had not auayled me to haue a pensayde the battayle wyth out I wolde haue yelded my selfe gylty. Guydo is strong and hardy in armes that his lyke is none but alexander, and I am weyke and feble & therfore if I hold the batayle agaynst hym I am but a dede man, and so shal ye abyde shamed and rebuked. Then sayd she, Do my counseyle in that, that ye mistrust your selfe, go hastily vnto my father, and say to hym that ye haue receyued letters, wherby that ye are acertayned that ỹ lord youre father is sore

sycke

sycke and lieth vpō his deth bed & desyreth to se you and speake with your persone and to dispose his kyngdome and his goods afore he departe out of this worlde and desire his licence for the loue of your father that ye myght go and visite him, and that he wil proroge and lenght the day of bataile the whiles that ye may go and come. And whan ye haue obteyned his congye or lycence, as hastely as ye may go secretely to the kinge alexander, and whan ye are come to him take hym aparte and shew him the cause of your comynge & require him ī this your vtter extremite that he wil vs helpe & ayde, and whan that Lodwyke had herde this counsel, it pleased him wel & did hereafter. Hys leue gotten and lenger daye or terme of battayle prefyxed & assygned departed and toke his iourney towards the realme of Egypt, and neuer lected day nor night tyll he came vnto king alex

anders

anders castell, and whan that kinge a-
lexander had vnderstondyng of his co
minge, he was moche glad and wente
to mete him, and receyued him honou-
rably, and had wonder of his comynge
Tho sayd Lodwyk. O my dere lorde
and my best beloued frende, my lyfe &
my deth is in your handes, for as ye
sayd to me afore that I shold haue an
other felowe the whiche sholde lye in a
wayte to aspye me and to destroye me,
without I saue the more wysely to mi
selfe: and as longe as I myght I ab-
sented me till that I coulde no lenger,
but afterwarde the kinges sonne of
Spayne makinge watche so longe on
me tyll that he perceyued the trouthe,
and hath accused me vnto the Empe-
roure, so that from this daye vnto the
viii, day hereafter prefixed it behoueth
me to fyght w hym body agaynst bo-
dy. & as ye knowe well he is a stronge
and an hardy man, & I am weyke and
feble

feble, and therfore hath Florentine cõ
seyled me that I shold not hide this in
charge from you. For she knoweth
you for a faythful frẽde, & that ye wold
not leue vs in this necessyte. Then
sayed alexander, is there ony body that
knoweth of your commynge vnto me
for this mater more than Florentyne.
He answered him and sayde no crea-
ture lyuing, for I toke leue of the Em-
peroure to go and vysyte my father ly
enge greuously seke. Then axed alex-
ander hym what counseyll hath Flore-
tyne gyuen to you howe and in what
wyse I myght helpe you. He sayed O
most constaunt and faythful frende, in
this wyse she hathe counseylled me, cõ-
sidering that we be lyke, that ye shold
come & do the batayle with him no mã
shal know you but she, and ỹ batayle
done I shall come agayne to the court
and ye vnto your countre. Then he as-
ked whã the day shuld be of ỹ batayle

and

and he sayd this day. viii. dayes. Then sayd alexander, yf I shoulde this daye tary then can I not come to that daye prefyxed. Therfore se what I shal do, I haue boden al my subgectes that to morowe they shoulde come and beat my weddynge and brydale, and yf I shold go than is that day loste, and yf I go not and do the batayle than Florentyne and ye are both vndone. what thinke ye nowe beste for to doo whan Lodwike herd that he fell to the earth & began to syghe and sorowe oute of mesure sayinge, sorowe and heuinesse come to me on al sydes. Then sayd Alexander vnto him, be of good comfort for I shal not forsake you thus, thoughe that I sholde lese my wyfe & kingdome, but herken what that I haue thought in so muche as we are bothe lyke: so that the one of vs cannot be knowen from the other, but we both together and I am not yet greatly knowen

wen here, but my barons & other folke
shal take you for me, therfore here shal
ye abyde and tary and mary my wyfe
in my stede, and holde the fest and bry
dale, & do in al thynges as though I
were there my selfe present, except whā
as ye come to bedde wt my wyfe loke y
ye be ther true and faythful: and I shal
wout taryenge go and take my horse
and ride thether as the batayle shalbe
and yf god gyue me the victory that I
may ouercome and baynquisshe youre
enemye. I shall come agayne secretly e,
and ye shal go agayne to your parties
and dwellynge place. This done alex
ander badde Lodwyke fare well, and
toke his iourney towardes the Empe
rours courte, for to fyght and do the
battayle with Guydo, and Lodwyke
abode in Egypt in the stede of kinge
alexander, and vpon the next morning
came Lodwyke as though it had be
kinge Alexander, and solemply in the

face of the churche maryed and spou-
sed Alexanders wyfe, and held the feste
and bridale w̄ greate royalte of delyc-
cate, and precious meates, plente of all
maner wynes, and dyuerse melodyes
of instrumentes of musyke, & he made
greate Joye and chere to all the noble
men, and to all other people that there
was assembled. And whan the nighte
was come, he wente to bedde with the
quene, and layd betwixt hym and her a
naked swerde, wherof she had greate
wonder, but nothinge she sayd, and al-
so he laye with her euery night as long
as Alexander was out. ¶ The kynge
Alexander at the daye that was pre-
fixed and set, came vnto the Emperour
and sayd. O most drad souerayne lord
it is so ỹ I haue left my father righte
seke. Neuertheless I am come for to
defende myne honour and my forward
to performe. The Emperour said ye do
ryght well and accordynge to a noble
man

man, and fortune shall fauoure you in your iuste & ryght wysse quarell. And whan the Emperours doughter vnderstode that alexander was comen, anon she sent for hym, and whan as he was come to hir she embraced him, & with ioye and gladnesse she kyste hym, and blessed the tyme that she myght se hym agayne and demaunded him where he that had left hir frende and louer lodwyke. Then he shewed and declared vnto hir all ỹ processe and how he had left hym kinge in his realme, and toke his leue at hyr, and wente to Lodwykes chamber, and there was no creature ỹ thought otherwyse but it was Lodwyke, only except Florentyne.

The next day folowynge afore er alexander wente vnto the batayle he sayde vnto the Emperoure in the presence of Guido. My most redoubted souerayne lord this Guido hath falsely & vntrulí accused me vnto your noble grace. ỹ I

sholde be of suche aqueyntaunce with your doughter that sholde be vnto the dishonoure of your most noble person and hers, and vnto that I swere and affirme, by this holy euaungelies ꝑ she was neuer in ony maner by me in such wyse knowen as he hath to you alledged & enformed & that this daye with the ayde and the helpe of God I shall proue and make good vpon his body. Then sayd Eupdo, yet ones I saye agayne & swere by the holye euaungelyes and by al that God hath made ꝙ thou hastehad knowledge and hast defouled the Emperours doughter, and that I shall make good vpon thy hed where vpon they lepte vpon theyr courses, and fiersly ranne together with theyr speares that they both brake and shyuered in peces, & they drewe theyr swerdes and faught longe together, tyll at the laste alexander with greate myght and strēgth at one stroke smote

of

of Guydoes hede, and sent it vnto the Emperours doughter wherof she was right glad, and bare it vnto her father and sayd. Father beholde the hedde of him that you and me hath falsely defamed, whan that the Emperoure perceiued the victory, anone, he sent for alexander whome that he beleued had ben Lodwik and sayd. O Lodwyke this daye your honoure and my doughters ye haue saued, ye shall stande and be ꝑ more in my grace and fauoure, and what soeuer he be that hereafter more defame you he shall for euer stande in my indignacion. Alexander answered god helpeth and saueth thē that trusteth in him & alwayes wreketh ꝑ blod vndeffectyue or innocent. But nowe my moste redoubted lord of one thyng I requyre you, at my departynge fro my father I lefte him sore sycke that it wil lyke you for to lycence me to go & se howe it standeth wyth him, & if that

it be ony thynge amended I shall in-
contynent come agayne. Then the Em-
perour sayd, that pleaseth me well, but
ye maye in no maner wyse leue me for
to henceforth I can not be wythoute
your presence. Alexander toke leue of ȳ
Emperoure and bad him fare wel, and
rode agayne vnto his Realme whome
whan Lodwike sawe he made greate
chere, and gladnesse, and righte frend-
lye receyued him and sayed. O moste
true frende of al frendes, tell me howe
ye haue done and spedde in your tour-
ney and nede, and what ende ye haue
brought it to. Then sayde he, Go to the
Emperoure and serue him as ye haue
done to fore. I haue gotten you more
grace and fauoure of him than euer ye
haue had afore tyme and I haue also
smyten of the hede of your enemy and
aduersary. Then said lodwik, ye haue
not onlye at this tyme saued my lyfe.
but many a tymes here afore, ȳ whiche

as

as yet I can not deserue, but god te-
warde you, and so departed and wente
agayne vnto the Emperoure, and ther
was no man that knewe of the absence
of alexāder saue onely Lodwyke. And
whan as the nyght was come he wente
to bed wyth the quene, and anone he
had wyth her swete and frēdly wordes
and her embraced and kyst. Tho sayde
she, ye haue made this time al to long,
that ye haue not shewed any thynge of
frenship or loue, how may this be. The
sayd he wherfore say ye that. She said
euery nighte as I was in my bedde, ye
haue layd betwixe you and me a naked
swerd and ye haue neuer tasted or tor-
ned you towardes me more thān now.
And whan the kynge herde that, he
thought on the trouthe of hys felowe
and sayd vnto hyr. O my most dere la-
dye and quene, it was not doe for none
euyll wyll, but for a good probacyon
and for a perpetuall loue.

But she thought in her selfe that loue shall ye neuer more haue of me, but ȳ dispite she thought I shall auenge vpon the, Tho was there a knight that she afore had a litell loue and fauoure vnto, and she beganne for to loue hym more and more, so longe tyll at the last they thoughte & ymagyned howe they myght destroy and slee the kinge, and therfore they gate poyson and poysoned the kinge, so that yf he had not ben right strōg of complexyon he had died therof, but it wrought in him so sore ȳ it caused him to be most foule and horrible Lepre or laser that euer was sene vpon earthe. The lordes and noble mē of his realme and the quene also seing this despysed him and sayd, that it behoued not a Lepre, to regne vpon vs, for he shold not procure nor engender ony fayre or clene heyres. And so he was deposed of the dygnite royall, and dryuen out of his Realme.

¶ In

¶ In the meane tyme dyed the Emperour of Rome and Lodwik wedded the doughter & after that Lodwikes father dyed, so that Lodwyke reygned both Emperoure and kinge of Fraūce at ones, whan kinge alexander herde that, he thought in himselfe. Now my felowe reygneth together vpon themppre and the Realme of Fraunce, to whome may I better go than to hym, for whome many tymes I haue aduentured my lyfe, & vpon a nyghte he rose vp and made him redy and toke wyth him his staffe and claper, and yede towarde themperours courte, and whan he was come nyghe to the gate, he set hym amonges other lasers abydynge the gyuynge of the almesse, and on a season as the Emperoure went out of his palays, all the poze lasers began to rynge theyr clappers, and the good kynge Alexander dyd lyke the other, but there was none almesse gyuen to them

but there was none almesse gyuen to them. He tarted so longe vnto the time that the emperour was set and serued at the table. Tho went kinge alexander vnto the gate and knocked therat, and the porter asked who was there, alexander answered him I am a poore despysed man, but for the loue of God I require you that ye torne not youre syght fro my vysage, and that ye will for the rewarde of god do my message vnto the Emperour he asked what is the mater, alexander sayde go and tell him here is a laser that right horryble is to see, the which prayeth him for the loue of god and kinge alexander that he will graunte him this daye to eate his almesse afore him vpon the erth in his hall. The porter sayde I wonder ye dare desyre that of my lorde, for whi all the hall is full of lordes, and noble men and if they behold you they shold al abhorre and leaue theyr meate. But

for ſo muche as ye haue requyred me ſo prokoūdly for the loue of god I ſhal go & do your erande what ſoeuer happen therof, & ſo he yede forthe afore the Emperour and dyd his meſſage, whan the Emperoure herde the porter name alexander the kinge of Egypt he ſayd to the porter, go bring him in afore me how horryble that ſo euer his viſage be, and ordayned him a place afore me that he may eate his meate afore me in my preſence. The porter brought him in a none, and ordeyned him a place & ſet him to meate afore the Emperoure and whan he was well refreſhed, he ſayd vnto one of the Emperours ſeruauntes. My dere frende do me thys erande to the Emperoure. Saye vnto hym that I praye hym for the loue of god & kyng alexander that he wil ſend me his cup wt wine. The ſeruaūt ſayd for the loue of god I ſhall do it, but I beleue it wyll not be, for yf ye ones

drinke

dryncke of my lordes cuppe, he wyll no
more dryncke of the same, neuertheleſſe
he dyd the erande. Anone as the Empe
rour herde hym name kynge alexandee
he commaunded his cuppe to be fylled
of the beſte wyne and bere it vnto hym
The whiche wyne whan he had recey-
ued it, he put it into his botel and toke
his ringe that Lodwyke had gyuē vn-
to hym, and put it into the cuppe, and
ſent it agayne vnto the Emperoure, &
whan the Emperour ſawe the rynge,
anone he knewe it that it was the ſame
that he had gyuen vnto Alexander in
frendeſhyp, whan that he departed fro
him, and thought in his herte that alex
ander is dead, or elles this manne is
marueylouſly come vnto the Kynge.
and commaūded anone ỹ ỹ laſer ſhold
not depart vnto the tyme he had ſpo-
ken with him, for in no wyſe he coulde
haue knoweledge of hym nor yet re-
puted hym for alexander, after that the

dynner

dynner was don and ended, the Empe
rour toke the seke man aparte and as-
ked howe he came by the Ringe.
Alexander demaunded yf he knew wel
the Ringe. The Emperoure sayde. I
knowe it right well. Alexander sayde,
wote ye also to whome ye haue geuen
it. Themperour sayd I wote right wel
Howe is it than sayd Alexander that
ye knowe not me, for I am alexander to
whome ye haue geuen the same ringe,
whan the Emperour herde that, he fell
downe to the grounde for sorowe, and
tare and rent his robbes and clothes, &
with great syghynges and bewaylin-
ges sayde. O Alexander ye be the one
halfe of my soule, whiche is your good
ly and delycate body ỹ was so fayre, ỹ
nowe so vnclene and wretchedly is en
fecte he answered. this is me happened
for the greate fydelyte that ye haue
done to me in my bedde, with my wife,
whan ye layde a naked swerde betwixt

you

pon & hir, wherfore she became wrothe and hated me, that she and a knight that a fore tyme she ought hir loue vn to haue impoysened me as ye maye see & aboue ỹ they haue dryuen me out of my realme, and whan the Empetoure herde that he for loue toke him aboute the necke and kyste him and sayd. O my moste entyerly beloued brother. I sorowe to see you in this great sykues and mysery, woulde god I myght dye for you. but my moost dere frende, suf fre pacyently a lytell tyme tyl that we haue sente for all the physycyons and wyse masters in physicke to haue their counseylle and aduyse, yf there be ony remedye or hope of recouerynge of your helthe, and yf it be possyble for to helpe you, we shal nether spare Empyre lord shyps nor other good tẽporal to make you hole and sounde. In the meane whyle he was brought into a fayre chã ber rychely apareled & appoynted of al

manes

maner thynges that were requisite & necessarye for his ease and helth, and in all haste he sente his messangers by al parties of the worlde, for the experte & moost wyse physycions that might be founde. Of whome within a monethe were come & assembled before the Emperoure. xxx, the whiche were right experte and subtyll in that science. To whome the emperoure sayde My wel beloued maysters I haue a frende that greuousely is infected wyth a leprye, whome I wolde ryght fayne were heled and made sounde, and no thynge theron to spare neyther golde ne syluer ne al ye other goodes ye I haue in this worlde, but I wolde gyue it to recouer his helth, The maysters answered and sayde al that euer is possible to be done by physycke that ye shall sone vnderstande after that we haue seen the personne, and forthwith as they had seen him, & perceiued the cause & mater of ye

infirmite

infyrmite they iudged it a dysease vñ curable for all the maysters lyuynge. and whan the Emperour herde that he was right sory in his hert, and remyt ted it vnto the helpe of almyghty god callinge vnto him relygious men, and poore people, & other deuoute persõs and desyred theim to pray to god, that he wolde vouchsaufe to make hole his frende the sooner for theyr good dedes and prayers, and he hymselfe with ma nye other fasted and prayed humblye to almightye god for the helth of hys frende. Upon a daye as kinge alexan der was in his prayers, there came vn to him a voyce sayinge. Yf the Empe rour will w̃ his owne handes slee his two sonne, which his wyfe hath borne by him at one burden, and washe thy body wyth the blode of them, thy body and thy flesshe shall be as fayre, and as clene as the flesshe of the lytel chyldren whan kynge alexander had herde thys

he

Here foloweth the applycacion of the exãple to purpose.

Then sayd the Emperours sõne Lorde haue ye vnderstande what I haue sayde. The Emperoure sayde ryght well. Tho sayd the sonne. My moofte honourable and redouted father, all thoughe that god hath giuẽ and indued me wyth wysedome and vnderstanding aboue many other, that shold not be in appayring of your honoure & myght, but moze for the pzeseruacion of the same. So in lyke wyse ỹ kinges mateste whiche was nothynge to the hinderaunce of his father, but rather for his wozshyp and pzofyte, for as longe as they lyued they were honoured in his realme. Than sayde the Emperoure. My dere sonne I wyll all hole resygne to you the Empyze to gouerne, for I perceyue well by your narracion that ye haue to me declared, that

It is beste to me & moost for myne ease that I leue this besynesse and labour and take me to more rest, for I am old and feble. The sonne answered his father. My lorde father, so shal it not be, but as longe as ye lyue ye shall haue the auctorite and myghte of the Empyre to do and comaunde as it appertayneth vnto an Emperour, but in all bestnes that are labourouse I wyl alwayes be redy to mynystre and to serue you accordinge to my dute.

¶ How the Judgement was geuen vpon the Empresse and how she and hir best beloue were put to deathe.

THen commaunded the Emperoure the Justices to sit in iudgemente, and bringe agayne the Empresse afore them wyth hir ladyes, and the ribaude hir best beloue clothed in vesture of a womã, the which he made to stande next vnto hir. Than the Emperours sonne asked sentence and iudgement vpon them sayinge. O lorde father, as ye be Emperour of all the worlde, and your mateste and power requireth to do true iustice vnto all people that desyre it. Now demaunde I of ye thys daye, gyue ryght sentence, and to do true iudgement vpon the vntrouthe, falsehed, and shame to me put and alledged, by the Empresse for the whiche, I haue seuen tymes be lad vnto the galowes, & haue stande in great

seoperdye and perylle of my lyfe. And also that she vntrue vnto you hath bē of hir bodye as ye haue seen by good profe made a fore you, vpon the whyche, I aske iudgement and therfore cō maunde your iustyces to gyue sentēce ther vpon accordynge to right & law. Anone as the Empresse herde thys she fell flat to the erthe afore ȳ Emperour and asked mercy and forgyuenesse, but it helpeth ne proufyted hir nothynge, for the sonne wolde haue right and de syred iudgement. Tho spake the Ius styces hir owne dedes condempneth hyr, and the profe of hyr lemmā by hyr founde. Therfore we gyue sentence a gaynst the Empresse that she shal be bounde to an horse taple, and drawen through al the stretes of the citie vnto the place of execucyon and there to be brent, and we iudge also and gyue sen tence agaynst the rybaude that he shal be quartred and smytten in peces and

his

his fleſhe caſt vnto the houndes, and
byrdes of the ayre for to deuoure hym
and this ſentence was approbate and
alowed of all people.

¶ Hereafter in ſhorte tyme dyed the
Emperoure, and Dyocleſyan hys ſone
gouerned and ruled themprye wyth
great wyſdome, and helde & kepte hys
mayſters with him in great honour &
glory, By whoſe counſeyll and wyſe-
dome he gouerned the Empire, that he
excelled all his predeceſſours in riches
and in doynge iuſtice and ryght. And
his mayſters loued him aboue all o-
ther thynges in the worlde. So
that many times they put thẽſelfe
in greate peryll and ieopertye
of there lyues for hym. And
ſo they ended theyr days in
great ioye & honour, and
cõmended theym to
almyghty god.
Finis.

Thus endeth the treatyse of the seuen sages or wyse maysters of Rome.

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